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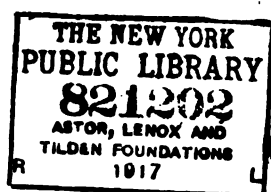
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THE TWO BRIDES. BY MISS LONDON.

VIVIAN GREY, Complete. BY D'ISRAELI.

THE RISE OF ISKANDER. BY D'ISRAELI.

PHILADELPHIA:
MORTON M'MICHAEL.
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THE TWO BRIDES;

OR,

ETHEL CHURCHILL.

CHAPTER I

AGE AND YOUTH.

So, said the old man, "what is life,
troubled waters—where the soul,
rest'd bark, is toss'd upon the waves,
and pleasure, by the wavering breath
of winds that drive it on,
to destruction and despair.
Is that we have known some former state
trous than our present; and the heart
ed by dim memories—shadows left
felicity. Hence do we pine
aspirings—hopes that fill the eyes
for tears for their own vanity.
hen fallen from some lovely star,
consciousness is as an unknown curse?"

yet, you chose to marry him!"
and should marry him again; but
me for this night, dearest uncle, as
often borne."

man's answer was to pass his hand
y over the beautiful head that rested
a of his chair; and his niece con-

spirits are overcast with a sadness
ave not hitherto known, and inexpli-

Did I believe in omens, I should
ay depression was ominous."

the idea of departure—but you al-
hed to visit London."

wish it still; but I knew not, up to
f parting, how much it would cost
er myself from my kind, my only

ave your husband, Henrietta;" but
ssion which accompanied the sen-
half sarcastic, half distrustful.

eeper shade of doubt passed across
and finely cast features of the youth-

have, from my cradle, impressed
he folly of love; and so far as my
s goes, it goes with you. All the
he heart that I have witnessed, have
t my wonder or contempt; nor could
erstand what people see so charm-
other. I could no more pass hours
dear Ethel, in imagining perfection
ess boy, than I could yield up all
es to the arrangement of colours in
Penelope-pleasing piece of embroi-

haps I am too quicksighted for the
of love.

ar eyes never dimmed then," said
r bitterly.

I put love out of the question, I
for something like affection; for,
t accords with Hamlet, and with

usage, to be 'a little more than kin, and less
than kind,' still, Lord Marchmont's coldness
oftentimes comes over me with the effect of
suddenly rounding a headland in one of our
valleys, and finding the north wind full in my
face. He takes not the slightest interest in
aught I say, and I have continually thoughts
and feelings which I am restless to communi-
cate. Here I do feel not this"—and she
turned towards him her glistening eyes—"for
my own dear uncle will always hearken to
me, explain, encourage, and show me how to
comprehend others and myself. But, far
away from him, surrounded by new scenes,
filled with fresh impressions, longing to clothe
in utterance all the bursting thoughts they
will excite, must I be lastingly condemned to
a silent life, and a closed heart."

"Better keep them so forever. Where-
fore unlock to others treasures priceless
to yourself, and valueless to them, unless the
disclosure serve to render you their dupe and
victim."

"How differently, my uncle, do we view
the world!"

"The difference lies but in knowledge. I
know that world—you know it not."

"Nay, I have learned it from yourself, and
experience teaches well."

"Ay; but before we profit, the experience
must be our own. A few short years, Hen-
rietta! for, to a temper such as yours, life
gives its lessons quickly; and we shall think
but too much alike. I may not live to see it,
but the time must come—and, ah! how soon—
when you will commune with yourself in the
solitude, perhaps, of this very chamber, and
admit, 'gloomy as were my uncle's views of
existence, the reality is yet more dark.'"

"O, no! Fate cannot but have made an
exception in my favour. Is there a single ad-
vantage that fortune has not blest me with—
young, high-born, married to one of England's
richest and proudest peers, handsome, clever—
is it not so? At morn I shall go hence, and,
what sort of triumph and pleasure can I antici-
pate at the metropolis?"

"And you will find both; but, alas! human
enjoyment is all too dearly atoned. The
ancients gave the balance of life to a dark
goddess, who, following in the track of for-
tune, as the shadow follows the sunshine,
enforces bitter payment for our few and transi-
tory delights. Nothing is good but evil
comes thereof. I took you, Henrietta, when
an infant, from your dying mother's arms."

Your cradle was placed in my laboratory; and often have I closed the midnight volume, to watch the fitful slumbers of your childhood. I have since given you all I had to give, my time, my knowledge; and for your sake loved on—hoped on. And now, that you are my sweet and intelligent companion, and my whole heart is bound up in you—your smile my all of sunshine, your step my only music—you must leave me; and to a solitude saddened by the remembrance of a beloved one, who never more can be what she has been to its lonely and weary occupant."

The young countess sprang from her seat, and threw herself at the old man's knees which she fondly clasped.

"No, no, my more, my more dear than father, I will not leave you. How vain, how selfish have I been! Why did you suffer me to marry—nay, what is Lord Marchmont to me? I will stay here happy, ah, too happy, in devoting all life to the debt of gratitude—nay, not gratitude, of love—that I owe to you."

Sir Jasper struggled for a moment,—'twas only for a moment—and the strong emotion was subdued.

"Not thus, my sweet child; the laws of nature are immutable; and they have decreed that the young bird shall leave the nest. Do not weep, my beloved girl: of what avail were it to keep you here until your loveliness and youth had departed. Even with your gladdening presence, I cannot now number many years; and to feel that I was leaving you lonely and defenceless—unpractised, too, in that world which requires all youth's energies to encounter—would imbitter even the pang of death! No—my best beloved Henrietta—I would have you form new ties, and other friends. The rare advantages of youth pass rapidly away, and my darling must enjoy them while she may. Her old uncle will not be forgotten. You will write to me often; and I shall still feel and think with you:" and, bending down, he kissed the sweet eyes that were looking up at him with such sad tenderness.

For a long time they sat in unbroken silence, and neither looked upon the other. Each gazed at the surrounding objects, and alike beheld them not. They saw but with the heart's eyes, and these turn on an inward world.

There are in existence two periods when we shrink from any great vicissitude—early youth and old age. In the middle of life, we are indifferent to change; for we have discovered that nothing is, in the end, so good or so bad as it at first appeared. We know, moreover, how to accommodate ourselves to circumstances; and enough of exertion is still left in us to cope with the event.

But age is heart-wearied and tempest-torn: it is the crumbling cenotaph of fear and hope! Wherefore should there be turmoil for the few, and evening hours, when all they covet is repose? They see their shadow fall upon the grave; and need but to be at rest beneath!

Youth is not less averse from change; but that is from exaggeration of its consequences for all seems to the young so important, and so fatal. They are timid, because they know not what they fear; hopeful, because they know not what they expect. Despite their gayety of confidence, they yet dread the first plunge into life's unfathomed deep.

Thus it was with Henrietta. She knew more of the world than most women of her years; for her converse had been chiefly with her uncle, a man of remarkable endowments; and she had read an infinite variety of books—read them, too, with that quick perception which seizes motive and meaning with intuitive accuracy.

Such, however, inevitably is half knowledge; and theory that lacks the correction of practice, is as the soul without the body.

In common with all of her impassioned temper, and sensitive feelings, she had much imagination. She had created a world which she was resolved to realize—a world where beauty was power, whose luxuries were poetry, and to whose triumphs she gave all her brilliant colouring of hope. Who, in actual life, can help smiling at the fancies in which early anticipation revelled; how absurd, how impossible, do they not now appear! Yet in such mockery lurks much of bitterness: the laugh rings hollow from many a disappointment, and many a mortification.

Henrietta had all this to acquire, and was taking on that very evening one of her first lessons in experience. Contrary to their wish, her wishes were at variance with themselves—the past and the future contended in her. Impatient to enter the "new more magnificent world," on whose threshold she now stood she was yet withheld by all the tenderest recollections of her childhood. She could not brook the thought of abandoning her uncle; his long and gloomy evenings arose before her, she saw him wandering all solitary through their favourite walks—sitting down to his lonely meals—watching by himself the dim hearth, and thinking continually of her. She raised not her eyes, but every object was distinctly visible to them, and woke a train of association which gave her the keenest pain. Never had the place seemed to her so gloomy, and all therein was so characteristic of her master.

It was a large vaulted apartment, and had been once a chapel; but it was now half library, half laboratory. The arches were formed of black oak, hewn into all the fantastic shapes of Gothic imaginings; in which was singular to note that all the natural imitations were graceful, while those of human work were hideous. The oak leaf and the garb mingled grotesquely with the distorted figures that ever and anon peeped from among the wreaths.

The walls were entirely hidden by bookshelves, or by cases containing rare specimens of fossil bones and reptile skeletons. There was a grizzly crocodile, its teeth white and sharp as when they glistened in the water.

tile; there, a massy serpent, knotted huge and hideous contortions; while
ids of small snakes, lizards, and disgust-
insects, were stored around, with a care
had obtained for Sir Jasper Meredith,
g his neighbours, the reputation of a ma-
n, though they were but the sickly fancies
heart ill at ease, that mocked itself in its
its.

a ceiling had been painted with the mar-
m of some saint. Who shall place a
i to human folly, when both the inflictor
he endurer of torture have deemed that
is acceptable in the sight of God? The
had long since faded from the ceiling,
n the twilight nothing was discernible
two or three wild and ghastly faces, far
like "spirits of health," than "goblins
ed!"

the carpet, at the hearth, basked, in a
-fire's heat, three enormous and black
the predilection for which, instead of for
the usual chosen companions of country
men, further increased the belief in Sir
r's unholy studies.

reason given for this preference, was
red with the same morbid perversity
ad its source in early disappointment.
like a cat," he would say, "because it
ot disguise its selfishness with any flat-
hypocrisies. Its attachment is not to
elf, but to your house. Let it but have
und a warm lair among the embers, and
is not at whose expense. Then it has
irit to resent aggression. You shall
our dog, and he will fawn upon you;
cat never forgives: it has no tender-
s, and it torments before it destroys its

landscape from the oriel window, in
they were now seated, was quite in
lance with Sir Jasper's professed tastes.
ronted the bleakest part of the coast, a
ite heath, which was relieved only by a
stunted trees, and became gradually
d in the sands. An undulating purple
which was "earth's great antagonist,"
a, closed the distance.

the horizon rested heavy masses of cloud,
a by red gleams of dying sunset, which,
vivid colours parted the darkening va-
but to disappear, showed like some gal-
pirit struggling vainly with the pressure
versity, and yielding one energy after
er, as it sank beneath some last misfor-
heavier than all before.

yet, the crimson hues flitted around,
ring distinct first one object and then
er. They settled now upon the two
watched them from that oriel window.

aged man was leaning back in a quaintly
sed oaken chair, on whose carving the

.. II.—2

arms of his family were gorgeously painted
and inlaid. In youth he must have been sin-
gularly handsome, but years and care had left
their vestiges on his noble features, which
were thin even to emaciation. You might
almost see the veins flow under the sunken
temples. Scarcely a hue of life hovered on
that wan cheek and lip, and his extreme pale-
ness was heightened by a profusion of black
hair, from whence time had not taken a shade
or curl. Contrary to the fashion of his time,
it drooped upon his shoulders, like a pall fall-
ing round the white face of a corpse.

On a low cushion beside sat his niece, at
once a likeness and a contrast. Their resem-
blance was striking,—there was the identical
outline,—though age had lost the glowing
tints of youth. Both had the same mass of
black hair, the high intellectual forehead, the
strongly marked brow, the slightly aquiline
nose; but, above all, there was the same ex-
pression, an inward and melancholy look,
whenever their features were in repose. It
was a similitude that every year would in-
crease, for it was the similitude of character.

Henrietta's was a style of beauty uncom-
mon in England, a bright and sunny brunette,
the soft brown of whose skin was warmed by
the richest crimson that ever flushed a cheek
with a whole summer of roses, while her lip
was of scarlet—the dewy coral has its fresh-
ness, but conveys not its brightness. Her
hair floated unbound in long soft tresses, and
her tall figure was almost concealed by a
white damask robe, fastened loosely at the
waist, but leaving that graceful outline which
reveals the most exquisite proportion!

No wonder that the old man's eye dwelt
upon her with mingled pride and tenderness;
yet was it a face that might cause affection
many an anxious hour, for there was mind in
the lofty and clear forehead, heart in the warm
and flushed cheek,—and what are mind and
heart to woman, but fairy gifts, for whose
possession a grievous price will be exacted.

Suddenly her uncle rose from his seat, ex-
claiming, "We are over sad and silent. I
will go seek the gift, reserved by me for our
parting. No duchesse in the court of St.
James shall rival the Lady Marchmont in dia-
monds, at least,—and you, Henrietta, will
have to make no sacrifice for their enjoy-
ment."

The youthful countess was gratified by dis-
play, for, to the imaginative, it bears a charm,
of which a more staid temperament dreams
not. Yet, at that moment, she felt as if the
acquisition of these gems were a calamity.
Their possession involved separation from her
uncle, from every relic of home affections, and
from all that yet lingered with her of her
childhood.

CHAPTER II.

THE MORALITY OF DIAMONDS.

There was an evil in Pandora's box
Beyond all other ones, yet it came forth
In guise so lovely, that men crowded round
And sought it as the dearest of all treasure.
Then were they stung with madness and despair:
High minds were how'd in abject misery.
The hem trampled on his laurell'd crown,
While genius broke the lute it waked no more.
Young maidens, with pale cheeks, and faded eyes,
Wept till they died. Then there were broken hearts—
Insanity and Jealousy, that feeds
Unto satiety, yet loathes its food;
Suicide digging its own grave; and Hate,
Unquenchable and deadly; and Remorse—
The vulture feeding on its own life-blood.
The evil's name was Love—these curses seem
His followers forever.

SIR JASPER re-entered, bearing a crimson velvet casket, and brodered with armorial bearings.

"It is getting dark and cold," said he; "let us draw to the fire."

Henrietta rang for the attendants to draw in the ponderous curtains; and in the meanwhile, curious to behold the stores of the emblazoned depository, lighted the tapers for herself. The case was speedily unclasped, and the countess stood dazzled with the brilliancy of the precious contents. She hastily took thence the bracelets, and fastened them upon an arm round and polished as of marble, then gathered up her night-black hair into the lustrous coronet, and ran to a mirror, which, though dim with time and use, grew radiant with these shining gems.

"My dear, good uncle," she cried, "you are too kind, too generous."

"Giving you your own, is no generosity," returned Sir Jasper: "these are the jewels of your house—the portion of its heiress."

"I am glad," said Henrietta, a flush of pride deepening the bloom upon her cheek, "that they have been ours; I am glad to associate their brightness with the past. Fresh from the merchant, they convey no sentiment but that of wealth; while these hereditary diamonds recall whole generations of stately beauty. I rejoice that they have descended with our line."

"So do not I," said her uncle, in a low and altered tone. "I see in those glittering trinkets the departure of youth and of love, the wreck of the heart's best hopes and sweetest affections. To me they are mocking records of the past. As they fling back the taper's rays, they seem to boast,—'The heart was a game between us; you risked upon it passion, truth, belief, but we won the stake.'"

He sank back in his arm-chair, and riveted his gaze upon one of the portraits which hung on the gloomy walls. Almost unwittingly, Henrietta pursued the motion of his eyes, which rested intensely upon a picture that displayed herself, as a child of three years, her father, and her mother.

In Sir Henry Meredith's appearance there was nothing that won upon the sight, though the limner had done his best for him. The countenance had no character. But his *countenance was indeed lovely*, like, and yet not like,

the daughter who now watched her. There was the same rich complexion, although the features were of less perfect contour, the forehead more narrow, and the face devoid of the meaning which mind, and mind only, can impart. But this the passing observer might scarcely have detected, for few would seek beyond that exceeding loveliness.

"She is very beautiful," sighed Sir Jasper. "to me was that face once the fairest of the Almighty's works. I loved, as they love who love but once. At parting from her, I have flung me on the ground along which her light feet had skimmed, to gather the common wild flowers that they could not crush. The casual mention of her name was to my ear heaven's sweetest melody; and, if only for her sake, believed in truth, and constancy, and goodness! I have felt sick with happiness when she has entered the room suddenly, and trembled like an infant, when I but fancied, read anger in her averted eyes.

"Lady Agnes was my cousin; and in birth, youth, and affection, we were a fitting match but we were poor. The world was, however, before us, and of what was I not capable for her love! I was strengthened even to part from her, and we parted!—parted, with the fixed stars above, whose light was less lovely than her tears. Of the two, she was apparently the more sorrowful; for I subdued my sadness, that it might not enhance her suffering. She called me back to her, to give me one of those long black locks which, if blown against my cheek, as we rambled together, made my whole frame shiver with delicious transport! I have now a raven severed from her graceful brow, but it is the same.

"Well, I forthwith went abroad, and joined my brother, who had for some years resided at Vienna. My heart was too young for silence, and I told him all. He heard me calmly; and as calmly promised further our attachment. The implicitness of my reliance stayed not to ask his sympathy. To talk of her was happiness, and my brother seemed a part of that home whither he was then returning.

"What desolation was in his departure for the first time I had to struggle against the world alone. Fortunately, from the absence of some, and illness of others, who were attached to me to the embassy, there was much to distract me from my dejection, for official duties had become of unusual severity. I was even happy then, for I was employed and had motive for employment. I lived for the future,—that future which I fashioned by my will. I have since tried occupation as a resource, and how different was it when sweetened by the projects of hope! A year passed rapidly away, and I could look with guileless forward to a successful career. Trusted, at length, with a mission to England, whose completion would give me a few days at Meredith place, I planned to come to them by surprise.

"How well I remember the evening

return on that old domain! The same light pervaded nature as when I left shadow of change had passed over house and its grounds. The oaks, scarcely yet in leaf, flung down their shadows, and the dew rested beneath them. The hawthorn's breath came gale as sweetly as of yore; and the air scattered the green blossoms as young peasantry call "locks and made the same rustling in the ashen

lived on alone, for my grooms had ridden with the horses. After a moment's breathe—for the sense of present was too much—I stood beside the same whereon her shadow was imprinted when we bade farewell; and fancied as my heart, it too should have re-created dark outline as faithfully as it the stars, which were flickering in even as I saw them then.

Now nearer the house, however, there were no signs of change;—I heard the carriages and the sound of music. A stream of light burst from the door. I must have arrived at the moment of festive celebration;—fortunate, for I could assuredly be there.

Without place this beyond doubt, ere I with-draw my dress, I entered the vestibule, and made my way to the gallery, from which I could look down on the scene below. All was gayety and motion; brilliant groups were fitting rapid succession; but my attention was attracted to the head of the room, where was stationed a lady in white satin, to whom my brother was presenting every guest

privately. I could hear the musicians applaud among the beauty of the bride, who at last turned her head towards the gallery upon whom I must look—it was Agnes!

Alas, I watched her more unmovedly than I tell you of that watching! The lady's head, from whose dark ringlets one yet next my heart, was bound with very diamonds; and the eyes that I had seen so sad and tearful, were now bright.

The sound of her silvery laughter came to me, as, resting on my brother's arm, she paced along the room. At once I turned from the gallery and forsook my face, and neither saw it nor England for long years. It matters not how time went by; suffice it, that my heart yearned within me to behold my dear again. Experience had taught me woman's falsehood was no unparalleled; but it had coupled with this, that nothing in after life can atone for the earnestness of our first rude awakening. I turned, hardly knowing wherefore, to my place—as if the scenes of youth were all my youth again! they only make me more acutely how far it is removed.

"On my arrival, I met, winding darkly along the great avenue, my brother's funeral train. I saw the soft blossoms of the hawthorn mingle with the black plumes of the hearse.

"Confusion was upon all things. Creditors were clamouring aloud in the house of the widow and the fatherless; and in the very hall through which a coffin had lately passed, were heard the jingling of glasses and the rattle of the dice-box.

"To my inquiries concerning Lady Meredith, the domestics abruptly replied, that 'she was very ill, in her own chamber.' 'Ay take my word, she will never leave it without being carried,' muttered an old woman, unfeelingly, as she hobbled slowly onward, with strength and temper alike exhausted by attendance on the invalid.

"I bade this person go, and demand if Lady Meredith could receive her brother-in-law; for, painful as our interview might be, it was indispensable. Meantime I stood apart in a recess, loathing the scene on which I was compelled to look: it was another leaf in the dark history of man's selfishness and ingratitude.

"Sir Henry had consumed his substance in ostentation and riotous hospitality—had fed many at his board, made many merry in his halls, but not a friend was in his house of mourning; the very retainers who had grown rich upon his ruin, seemed to deem the burial of their master but a signal for carousing and license. The old woman soon returned, bringing word that 'her ladyship would be glad to see me.' What mockery in such a message! Though my way was through many well-known chambers, I recognised not one. My sight was deadened to external things: I was absorbed by a troubled and vague picture—the coming interview.

"'This is my lady's room,' said my decrepit guide. Even in that hour, what first occurred to me was surprise that the lady of our noble mansion should have chosen for her abode one of its smallest and worst apartments. All bore an air of discomfort. Though the evenings were still chilly, no fire was upon the hearth, which was strewn only with yesterday's gray and mouldering ashes: night was fast closing in, and the curtains were as yet undrawn, while the half daylight made the single still glimmering candle yet more faint.

"I approached the bed, and all else was forgotten. There was stretched, pale, worn, and changed, beyond what I had even dreamed of change, she whose image was still treasured in my heart so fair and so bright. Years, long years of care, had borne heavily on those sunken temples, and on those pallid features.

"She perceived me instantly, and feebly extended her hand, but her words died in the utterance. I kissed her cold and wasted fingers, and bent in silence over her.

"A little creature was already kneeling there, but I yet saw nothing beyond the strange and hollow eyes which gazed upon me, as if in entreaty. 'Though altered and dim I could

still read their wishes. She then pointed to a restorative medicine which stood near; and, young as you were, Henrietta, you marked the sign, and, pouring a few drops into a cup, brought it towards the couch. Not tall enough to reach her mouth, you gave the cup gently into my hands—and your parent's weary head was upheld by my arm to take it from me, but she had no longer the power to swallow. By the help of a chair, you had now clambered up among the pillows, and were trying if she would drink it at your offer. Something in the face suddenly struck you as unaccustomed, for you were terrified, and looked imploringly towards me for aid.

"I turned to the aged nurse, but she was lying back in a deep-cushioned easy, overpowered with weariness and heavy sleep.

"Again Lady Meredith raised her head from the pillow, and a sudden and unnatural light flashed from her drooping eyelids.

"*"I know you, Jasper,"* said she, in a faint and sepulchral voice. *"It had been hard for me to die without your forgiveness. You are looking kindly and sadly on me: look ever thus, I pray you, on my poor and orphan child, who can claim no friend upon the earth, except yourself."* I raised you, pale, pretty creature that you were, from the bed, and you clung about my neck. *"Yes, she will love you!"* murmured the sufferer, yet more feebly; and, at the next effort to ejaculate, her accents died away with a frightful gurgling in the throat.

"She stretched her hands convulsively—a rapid change passed over her features—I looked upon the face of the dead!"

The silence which ensued at the close of this narrative, was broken by Sir Jasper's remark: "Well, my poor Henrietta, the mother more than atoned for all, when she bequeathed to me the daughter. But human nature is, at the best, but selfish: I looked forward to your alliance with Lord Marchmont as the realization of my dearest wishes. You are married; and I shrink from your alienation from me. I dread to commit my treasure to a callous, cruel world. But, good night, love, for we must arise with the dawn, and I am weary—most weary; to-morrow, I shall be in better spirits."

He kissed her, and they parted for the night.

CHAPTER III.

ANTICIPATION.

We do not know how much we love,
Until we come to leave;
An aged tree, a commonflower,
Are things o'er which we grieve.
There is a pleasure in the pain
That brings us back the past again.
We linger while we turn away,
We cling while we depart;
And memories, unmark'd till then,
Come crowding on the heart.
Let what will lure our onward way,
Farewell's a bitter word to say.

The moon was shining full into Lady Marchmont's window, and a soft western breeze was

stirring the branches at the yet open casement. The aspect on this side the dwelling was as wooded and fertile, as on the other it was bare and barren. To the left, towered an ancient avenue of oaks; to the right, a pleasure ground was carried aslope towards the park.

"Still and so beautiful was that fair night,
It might have calm'd the gay amid their mirth,
And given the wretched a delight in tears."

But Lady Marchmont's feelings were not in unison with the scene; she was excited and restless, needed to talk, and not to think—in a word, to be taken out of herself.

The objects around were wearisomely familiar; they recalled too much for one, who wished rather to hope than to repine! Henrietta's temper was too sudden and quick for melancholy; she was impatient of her own regret, and strove to dissipate rather than indulge the mood.

At that moment it struck eight o'clock. The church-spire, touched by the moonbeams, shone above the aged yews that stood in a heavy group below. The chime struck Lady Marchmont's musing into another vein.

"How early," thought she, "and Algernon will not be at home for many hours. I might go and visit Ethel: to-morrow I shall have little leisure." She threw a mantle hastily around her, and drawing its hood above her head, descended to the garden. As she ever and anon passed by some shrub herself had planted, or neared some covert bower where she had whiled away the listless hours, she would half pause, and again would urge her pace hurriedly onward.

She had now reached the churchyard, which few of her age and time would have traversed with her indifference. She ran across it, as the shortest route to Mrs. Churchill's grounds; and Mrs. Churchill was the grandmother with whom Ethel dwelt.

A little wicket opened into a half-wilderness, half-shrubbery, whose narrow path was chequered by the soft light that found its way through the densely-grown plantation. As she turned to secure the latchet, the voice of music came upon her ear. "Ah!" said she, and a conscious blush lit up her cheek; "Walter Maynard is then with them." The sound of her own half-whisper seemed to startle herself, and she passed on with a haughty smile, but hesitating step. "And Norbourne Courtenaye, doubtless;" but this name was spoken without embarrassment, and aloud.

Another instant, and the music ended; the leafy screen was divided, and she was the centre of the little company, every one of whom rejoiced to welcome her. She seized herself by Ethel; and declaring that her husband had left her no breath as yet to talk, urged them to resume the harmony that she interrupted. All were too young, and too intimate, for the embarrassment of ceremony; and again music broke on the stillness of the night.

It was an old English air, to which the

carists had set the words of a sonnet, written by Walter Maynard. The words of the song were sad: but what is the young poet's melancholy but prophecy?

Dream no more of that sweet time
When the heart and cheek were young;
Dream no more of that sweet time
Ere the veil from life was flung.
Yet the cheek retains the rose
Which its beauty had of yore,
But the bloom upon the heart
Is no more.

We have mingled with the false,
Till belief has lost the charm
Which it had when hope was new!
And the pulse of feeling warm.
We have had the boom wrung
By the mask which friendship wore;
Affection's trusting happiness
Is no more.

We have seen the young and gay
Dying as the aged die;
Miss we not the laughing voice,
Miss we not the laughing eye?
Wishes take the place of hope,
We have dream'd till faith is o'er;
Its freshness made life fair, and that
Is no more.

Take away yon sparkling bow!—
What is left to greet it now?
Loathing lip that turns away;
Downcast eye and weary brow.
Hopes and joys that wont to smile,
Mirth that lit its purple store;
Friends that wont to join the pledge,
Are no more.

The scene was rather grouped by some Italian painter, whose fancy had grown luxuriant amid the golden summers of his clime, than one actually passing under England's colder sky, and on England's colder soil. In front there was a sloping lawn, shaded from all but the south wind, a favoured nook of verdure begirt with trees and flower-beds.

On one side, fancifully decorated with shells and spars, mosses and creeping plants, was discovered a building, between hermitage and summer pavilion; on the other waved a corpse of larches, exhaling that spicy and peculiar fragrance which the autumnal wind brings from out the fir. Two little passages, cut into stairs of turf, wound uniformly to the level sward which made the foreground of the landscape. At the end of this was a sundial, whereon the moon fell with sufficient brightness to reveal the hour: beside was a fountain whose waters trickled with a low perpetual song, from the rough lips of its carved basin, into a large reservoir, moulded from fragments of stone, sea-shells, and gnarled roots of trees bound with a growth of weeds and wild creepers. Southward, the lawn lay open to a pleasure garden, but the flowers were now but few, and those of the faintest hue and perfume. The gorgeous reds and yellows which herald decay were beginning to touch the forest foliage; and the limes, in which autumn's first symptoms are so lovely, looked in the pale light as if covered with primrose blossoms.

Throughout the garden there was, indeed, much arrangement, and much art; from the water jet, trained to fling its silvery cascade, to the yew-trees shaped into peacocks; still it was arrangement prompted by taste, and art that loved the nature which it guided. And

if the horticultural skill, on which Mrs. Churchill piqued herself, might have escaped the stranger's observation, the little knot now gathered before her terrace would inevitably have caught his attention.

The party was of five: Ethel and her half-companion, half-attendant, Lavinia Fenton, our countess, and two young gallants. Three of these were singing; but the attitude and bearing of the entire group, careless as it was, told of their individual peculiarities more effectively, perhaps, than would have been betrayed in more constrained hours.

Norbourne Courtenaye was a stripling of some three or four and twenty, whose fair complexion made him look even younger. He had that air which so marks our aristocracy—that air which, if not imbodied in the word "high-bred," is beyond the reach of words. He had those fine and prominently cut features which grow handsomer with years; but, at the present time, they conveyed only one expression. The heart was in the eyes; and these, fixed on Ethel Churchill, were blind to all but the beloved face which alone they cared to see. To Norbourne the whole world had one division, the place where she was, from that where she was not.

Ethel returned not his gaze; but she was not on that account insensible of it. Natural as it may seem to look straight forward, her eyes tried every direction save that in which they might fall on those of Courtenaye. Her part in the trio was nearly nominal, and yet no bird singing in the sunshine, seemed ever to sing more from the fulness of a joyous heart. Her voice, when you caught it, was, indeed, "the very echo of happy thoughts;" and smile after smile parted her small and childish mouth. Her beauty was of that kind which is our ideal of a cherub's—rounded, innocent, and happy. The long golden hair—for she was too young yet to have it dressed after the prevailing mode—absolutely sparkled in the light; while her skin realized the old poet's exquisite delineation:

"Fair as the trembling snow whose fleeces clothe
Our Alpine hills; sweet as the rose's spirit
Or violet's cheek, on which the morning leaves
A tear at parting."

The least cause sent the blush to the cheek, and the laughter to the lip; for Ethel was guileless as she was gay.

The darling, like Henrietta, of an aged relative, their training had been widely different. Half Ethel's life had been spent in the flower garden; and it was as if the sweetness and joyousness of the summer's sunny children had infused themselves into the being of their youthful companion. The open air had given strength to an originally delicate frame, and cheerfulness to her mind. She had read little beyond her grandmother's cherished volumes, of which a herbal was the study, and the Cassandra of Madame Scudori the recreation. Out of these stately impossibilities, she had constructed an existence of her own, full of love, courage, and fidelity: all highly pictu-

resque and highly false. No matter—the truth comes only too soon.

And so, when Norbourne Courtenaye, a distant connexion of the family, arrived in a course of careless wandering at their house, it seemed the most natural and fitting thing that should fall in love with Ethel. It seemed, too, not less natural nor less fitting, that she should fall in love with Norbourne; though not a little disheartened, at starting, by the absolute want of difficulties and adventures, with which she afterwards discovered that it was actually possible to dispense.

Mrs. Churchill saw nothing of what was going on—she had her own views for Ethel, whom she considered too much a child to have any of her own; and she was only pleased to have her house so cheerful. Family and fortune were on both sides equal; and they might enjoy, so it seemed, as long as they could contrive it, a courtship's charming uncertainty, without a solitary obstacle to render it uncertain.

Lavinia, her companion, was likewise handsome; or, perhaps, rather what is called a fine looking girl; and had in her figure and demeanour, as well as in the arrangement of her simple toilet, that which bespoke the coquette of nature's own making; and nature does as much in that way as society. Neglectful of her fine voice, she was obviously attending more to her companions than to her own singing; and it was manifest that she was not unwilling to attract Walter Maynard's heed, for she would omit from time to time her own, and listen to his part; and, when she suffered her rich notes to swell to their extent, it was in Maynard's eyes that she sought to read approval!

But, what attention he allowed to escape from the music, was given all to Ethel Churchill. If his eye but turned towards her, the heart's utter prostration was in the gaze!

And she—the young and brilliant countess, who sat at queenlike distance from the throng—must watch those glances with a galling pang of envy; not the less bitter, too, because unacknowledged even to herself!

Walter Maynard was standing with his arms folded, and his slight figure leaning against the trunk of an old ash. He was neither so handsome, nor had so fine a figure, as Norbourne Courtenaye; and lost something of his height by a stoop, the result either of a naturally delicate chest, or of sedentary pursuits: but none, knowing how to read the human face, could have passed by his without having their attention riveted. It had a touch of Henrietta's own rich and changeable hues, but it was more feverish. The eyes were large and black, and had the moonlight's melancholy, with that tearful lustre which is the certain sign of keen susceptibility. After-years will drive the tears, which gathered trembling on the eyelash, back upon the

heart; but the tears will be more bitter, because unshed!

The mouth was almost feminine in its sweetness, and yet the smile was sad. Tender it was, but not cheerful, and lacked the energy that sat enthroned upon the magnificent brow. Young as he was, his hair was thin upon his temples, where the large veins shone transparent and blue; and the whole countenance was one which would have won attention in a crowd—which could not be identified with a common person. He was of those whose sensitive organization, and inborn talent, constitute that genius which holds ordinary maxims at defiance. No education can confer—no circumstances check it; and even to account for it, we need, with the ancients, to believe in inspiration.

Sir Jasper Meredith had noted the extraordinary abilities shown by Walter, even in his childhood; and, having confirmed the correctness of that first impression, had sent him to the university. There, however, he had disappointed expectation. In sooth, his genius was of too creative an order for the apprenticeship of learning; he needed life in its hopes, its fears, its endurance; all that the poet learns to reproduce. Education is for the many, and Walter Maynard was of the few. He had been much in Meredith Place, and Henrietta had been used to listen by the hour to his eloquent enthusiasm, so alive with poetry and with passion. Proud and ambitious, she yet loved him—the poor and the dependent; for there was in his highly-toned imagination that which responded to her own. She was too clever herself not to appreciate a kindred cleverness; and the seclusion of her life lent a reality to his dreams of the future—to his aspirations after that fame, which every volume in the crowded collection proclaimed to be so glorious. They read together; and she felt that his was, indeed, the master mind. Her vanity was gratified by his intellect. It was a worthy homage.

These softer feelings were awakened by that interest which belongs to the melancholy and romance inseparable from the poetic temperament.

In the outset of their intimacy, admiration seemed a mere question of taste; and jealousy first taught her that she loved. She saw that he loved Ethel Churchill, utterly, worshipingly: that the withered flower which Ethel flung from her was to him a treasure. She then remembered that her own early bearing towards him had been haughty, and indifferent; that she had sneered at the young collegian's shyness; and now thought with "the late remorse of love," how unlike to this had been Ethel's gentle kindness. But all these things belonged to by-gone days. She wrapped herself up in a brilliant future. Still there were moments when she felt that its hopes were icicles.

CHAPTER IV

O! never another dream can be
Like that early dream of ours,
When the fairy, Hope, lay down like a child,
And slept amid opening flowers.

Little we reck'd of our coming years,
We fancied them just what we chose;
For, whatever life's after lights may be,
It colours its first from the rose.

"So you are going to leave us?" said Ethel.
"Why, child," (they were of the same age, but Henrietta's mind had far outgone its years,) "you say this in the most dolorous of tones. I really see nothing so very dreadful in going to London, where I have made up my mind to force the women to die of envy, and the men of love,—the one by my diamonds, the other by my eyes."

"None may doubt the power of the latter, at least," observed Courtenaye.

"True to your fine sayings," replied Henrietta; "I would not give thank-you for a compliment from a person in your position. Now, don't blush, Ethel; I am only laying down general rules. A man in love is a non-entity for the time—he is nothing; and nature, that is, my nature, abhors a vacuum. Now is not that a philosophical deduction, Mr. Maynard?"

Walter started from his reverie—he had not been listening.

"You never know what one is saying," exclaimed Lady Marchmont, pettishly.

"Nay," said he, in one of those deep melodious voices which almost startle with their peculiar sweetness, "I heard you speak, and, as one often does with songs, in the music I lost the words."

"How I should like," said Ethel, "to see you dressed on the day of your presentation. When I imagine things about you, I always fancy you '*reine d'amour*' at a tournament, while

—— your eyes
Rain influence, and adjudge the prize."

"Thank Heaven," cried Henrietta, laughing, "you do not, even in fancy, turn me into a shepherdess, with sheep on one side, and a purling brook on the other."

"And yet," said Ethel, "there is something that takes my fancy mightily in these sweet and tranquil pictures. I have always felt sorrow when my shepherdess has been taken from her green meadows, even to a palace."

"Well, my vocation is not for innocent pleasures," returned Lady Marchmont: "I own I prefer my own kind to lambs and wild flowers."

"How entirely I agree with you," cried Walter Maynard; "as yet I know little of life, excepting from the written page: but existence appears to me scarcely existence, without its struggles and its success. I should like to have some great end before me; the striving to attain, amid a crowd of competitors, would make me feel all the energies of life."

"And yet," interrupted Courtenaye, "what hours of seeming delicious reverie I have seen you pass, flung on the bank of some lonely river, where the hours were mirrored in sunshine."

"I was thinking of the future," and Walter, "and a very pleasant thing to about."

"If we had but one of those charming old fairies for godmothers," said Norbourn, "of whom my nurse was so fond of telling, in the vain hope of putting me to sleep; as if I did not keep myself awake as long as I could, to hear;—if such a one were to appear, I wonder what gift we should each choose?"

"I should so like to know," replied Lady Marchmont; "now let us be honest, and frankly confess the inmost desire of our hearts. I will set the example; for, as I am going to court, I may not need to speak truth for some time, and may therefore use up what I have now. I frankly confess that my wish would be for universal admiration."

Walter Maynard paused for a moment, looking at Ethel; it was but a glance, and a deeper melancholy came over his face.

"I would wish," said he, "for fame—glorious and enduring fame."

"And I," cried Alice, eagerly, "would wish to be a lady—have an embroidered mask gown, and ride in a coach-and-six."

"I would wish," whispered Ethel, "to be loved."

"And," added Norbourn, in a whisper almost as low, "I would wish to love."

"I think," exclaimed Lady Marchmont, "that Alice's wish is the most rational of all. Well, girl, success to your coach-and-six."

"And I wish," said a venerable old lady, who, unperceived, had joined the young circle, "that you would all come into the house—for the evening is growing damp, and supper is ready."

"My dear Mrs. Churchill," said Lady Marchmont, taking her hand, and respectfully kissing it, "you must not fancy that this is a farewell visit. I came hither to-night, for I did not know what to do with myself. The way of the world—I have had all I wanted, and must go."

"Just come in," said Mrs. Churchill, "and take one glass of my mead."

"No—not even such a golden promise tempts me. I am afraid that Lord Marchmont will be at home before me—and he is not yet accustomed to be kept waiting."

"I would not, on any account, detain you—but come and see us to-morrow," said the old lady, kindly.

Waving her hand, Henrietta ran rapidly down the path by which she came, and was soon out of sight.

"She is a sweet creature, and a lovely," said Mrs. Churchill; "I wish she may bring back the same light step and heart with which she leaves us."

Mrs. Churchill was not the first person who has been deceived by appearances. "The light step there assuredly was—but the light heart

Henrietta herself would have said was a heavy one. With spirits exhausted by the forced exertion of the last hour, she came back to her room even more gloomy than when she left it.

"I have seen him for the last time;" and perhaps that moment was the only one during their whole acquaintance, that she had thought of Walter Maynard with unmixed tenderness. Pride, mortification, and disdain of his actual position, had usually mingled with all gentler thoughts. But there is something in parting that softens the heart;—it is as if we had never felt how unutterably dear a beloved object could be, till we are about to lose it forever.

Unconsciously to herself, she had grown accustomed to see Walter Maynard, to note the changes in his expressive face, to listen to his picturesque and impassioned discourse. It now struck her suddenly how much she should miss them. The knowledge of her own heart, and of his, had come together. Hope had never been the companion of love. Even in her most secret communings with herself, she had never admitted even the fancy of their union. But to-night she felt deeply within her secret soul the utter happiness of being and being beloved. What were her brilliant prospects? The truth within her whispered that she had been happier, even in the lonely lot which she that very evening had ridiculed, with Walter Maynard, than in a palace, and not his. For the first time, she regretted her marriage. Lord Marchmont had been the cause of her drawing comparisons. Her superior mind at once detected the narrowness of his: and her warm heart shrank from his cold one. She saw that he did not love her—that he never even thought whether she loved him.

"'Tis a strange thing," she murmured, "how love, which should be such a blessing, should yet cause so much misery and disunion. Ah! Ethel does not know her own happiness. I only wonder Mr. Courtenaye did not fall in love with me. It would have completed our game of cross purposes,"—and she laughed aloud. The sound of her own laughter jarred upon her ear.

"What do I laugh at?" thought she; "at wasted affection—at the consciousness that, young as I am, my heart is withered—that I look to amusement as to a resource, and to vanity as the business of an existence. Ah! love is more powerful than I deemed; for at this very moment of whom am I thinking?—my kind uncle?—no; of a stranger. It is the last time I will yield to such a weakness;" and, rising from her seat, she began to pace the room. With a struggle to escape from her own thoughts, she rang for her attendants, and, complaining of fatigue, went hastily to bed. But a crowd of heavy thoughts came to her pillow; and if, when Lord Marchmont returned, he had gazed on the beautiful face then hushed in sleep, he would have seen that the cheek was flushed, and that tears yet glistened on the long dark eyelashes.

CHAPTER V.

A POET'S MIDNIGHT.

Is not the lark companion of the spring?
And should not hope—that sky lark of the heart—
Bear, with her sunny song, youth company?
Still is his sweetest music pour'd for love;
And that is not for me: yet will I love,
And hope, though only for her praise and tears,
And they will make the laurel's cold bright leaves
Sweet as the tender myrtle.

HENRIETTA'S was not the only step that crossed the churchyard on that night; it was, also, Walter Maynard's nearest way home. But he paused, and stood gazing around. It was a night solemn and lovely as ever seemed fitting atmosphere for the city of the dead. There was not a cloud upon the face of the sky; the vapours and the cares of day had dispersed in the pure clear atmosphere. The dew were rising, and the long grass seemed like a sheet of bright and waveless water in the moonlight. The panes of the Gothic window in the church glittered like a succession of small shining mirrors; and the vane on the spire was like a light placed there. The scattered tombstones lay white around; and nothing on that side the building told of the depth of shadow which was behind. The birds had long since been asleep; and not a breath of wind stirred the drooping leaves. There was an uncertain beauty in the distance, which gave an additional charm to the scene; the light, silvery and tremulous, was more indistinct than that of day. Familiar objects took new shapes, and every outline was softened down with a varying and undulating grace.

But Walter Maynard's eyes were fixed upon one spot. A light was in the window of a turret just caught among the old oaks that surrounded Mrs. Churchill's house. Once or twice a shadow flitted past, and the light was obscured. In the silence you might have heard the youthful watcher's heart beating. It was Ethel Churchill's window. At length the light was extinguished, and Walter turned slowly away.

"It is all dark now," said he, "and the better suited to me. Why should I even wish for her love? What have I to offer? only my hopes; and what are they?" As he spake, his eyes rested on the graves below. "Yes," muttered the youth, "they are sufficient answer; they are indeed the end of all human hope."

Mechanically he turned from one to another. Some were recently banded down with osiers, and the grass was varied with primrose roots: on some the foxglove grew luxuriantly, while others had a tombstone, carved with a name and a brief epitaph.

"Ay," said Walter, "this rude verse long outlasts those for whom it is written. The writer, the reader, the sorrow which it embalmed, have long past away,—not so the verse itself. Poetry is the immortality of earth: where shall we look for our noblest thoughts, and our tenderest feelings, but in its eternal pages? The spirit within me asserts its divine right. I know how different I am

from those who surround me. Can the gifts of which I am conscious be given to me in vain? It were a mockery of the mind's supremacy, did I not believe in my own future?

He turned again in the direction of the turret window, and the large, round moon shone above the old trees. It seemed as if she looked down tenderly and lovingly on that dearest spot.

"Ah, sweetest and loveliest!" exclaimed the watcher, "would to heaven those days were not past when the troubadour took his sword and lute, and taught far courts the light of his lady's eyes, and the music of her name! But the sympathy to which he appealed yet remains. There are still human hearts to be stirred by the haunted line, and the gifted word. My page may be read by those who will feel its deep and true meaning, because, like myself, they have loved and suffered. Farewell, sweetest Ethel! we, perhaps, shall meet no more, but you will hear of me; and the remembered beauty of that face will be my angel of inspiration—the one sweet muse lighting up my lonely heart."

Hastily he left the churchyard, his pace rapid as his thoughts, which framed, as he went along, his future plans; and to visit London as soon as possible was his last resolve. He soon reached the dilapidated house which called him master; but the ivy, silvered by the moonlight, hid the desolation which was so apparent by day.

His family had left his father a ruined fortune, which a life of adventures did not tend to improve. Mr. Maynard returned home with an orphan boy; and a wound in his side, received while defending his superior officer, led to his premature death. With many to advise, but none to govern, the orphan boy led a desultory life, often wasting his time, but still collecting material for the future productions of a creative and poetical mind.

In one of the most original and thoughtful works of our day, it is said,—

"It is a fatal gift; for, when possessed in its highest quality and strength, what has it ever done for its votaries? What were all those great poets of whom we talk so much! what were they in their lifetime? The most miserable of their species: depressed, doubtful, obscure; or involved in petty quarrels, and petty persecutions; often unappreciated, utterly uninfluential, beggars, flatterers of men, unworthy of their recognition. What a train of disgusting incidents, what a record of degrading circumstances, is the life of a great poet!"

This is too true a picture; still, what does it prove, but that this earth is no home for the more spiritual part of our nature—that those destined to awaken our highest aspirations, and our tenderest sympathies, are victims rather than votaries of the divine light within them? They gather from sorrow its sweetest emotions; they repeat of hope but its noblest visions; they look on nature with an earnest

love, which wins the power of making her hidden beauty visible; and they reproduce the passionate, the true, and the beautiful. Alas! they themselves are not what they paint; the low want subdues the lofty will; the ~~self~~ and present vanity interferes with the far ~~glorious~~ aim: but still it is something to have looked beyond the common sphere where they were fated to struggle. They paid in themselves the bitter penalty of not realizing their own ideal; but mankind have to be thankful for the generous legacy of thought and harmony bequeathed by those who were among earth's proscribed and miserable. Fame is bought by happiness.

CHAPTER VI.

MUCH CHANGE IN A LITTLE TIME.

And she too—that beloved child, was gone—
Life's last and loveliest link. There was her place
Vacant beside the hearth—he almost dream'd
He saw her still; so present was her thought.
Then some slight thing remind him how far
The distance was that parted her and him.
Fear dwells around the absent—and our love
For such grows all too anxious, too much fill'd
With vain regrets, and fond inquietudes:
We know not love till those we love depart.

Nor above a month had elapsed since a little party were seated on the sloping lawn, and yet that short space had sufficed to change the position of all assembled in the pleasant quiet of that evening.

In the gloomy library of Meredith Place is seated an old man, surrounded by books, which he is too weary to read, and by chemical apparatus which he has not spirits to use. Till she went, Sir Jasper knew not how dearly the child of his old age had clung to his very existence. He fancied that he had resources in his own mind: alas! the mind ill supplies the wants of the heart. There is to age something so enlivening in the company of youth, unconsciously it shares the cheerfulness it witnesses, and hopes with the hopes around, in that sympathy which is the kindest part of our nature. Even his young neighbour who so often shared his studies, had departed—Walter Maynard had gone to London. Nor was the house of the Churchills less altered. Their young kinsman had received a sudden summons from his mother, on the occasion of his uncle, Lord Norbourne's visit. Ethel sat lonely on the little lawn, where every thing had altered almost as much as her own feelings. The approach of autumn's bleaker hour had stripped many of the trees of their foliage, and the bare boughs waved disconsolate to a low and moaning wind. The last of the flowers had fallen from the stem; and there was not even moonlight to soften the dreariness of the scene. The dark evenings closed in rapidly, and even the cheerful fire-side failed to bring back the smile to Ethel's lip, or the gladness to her eye. There was, however, one time to which she and Sir Jasper alike looked forward. The poet came in twice a week; and the sound of the horn

though its arrival was always expected, and every minute of the hour before it came counted, while the breath was held for fear of losing a sound, yet not the less did Ethel's colour deepen to crimson, and her heart beat even to pain. Night after night, too, did she sink back with the sickness of disappointed hope. No letter came from Norbourne Courtenaye.

Sir Jasper was more fortunate: he also set two days apart in the week, he also counted minutes of the evenings when the post came in; but he was never disappointed—it always brought him a letter. Whatever might be the young countess's engagements, none prevented her from writing to her uncle; and for the sake of the beloved writer, the aged recluse took an interest in all the news of the day—in such light chronicles as the following epistle.

FIRST LETTER OF LADY MARCHMONT TO SIR JASPER MEREDITH.

Vanity! guiding power, 'tis thine to rule
Statesman and vestryman—the knave or fool.
The Macedonian cross'd Hydaspes' wave,
Fierce as the storm, and gloomy as the grave.
Urged by the thought, what would Athenians say
When next they gather'd on a market-day?
And the same spirit that induced his toil,
Leads on the cook to stew, and roast, and boil:
Whether the spice be mix'd—the flag unfurl'd—
Each deems their task the glory of the world.

AFTER all, my dearest uncle, nothing has impressed me more strongly than our first approach to London. It was getting dusk, and I had for some time been leaning back fatigued in the carriage, when, raising my head, I saw afar off a line of tremulous light on the horizon: it was the reflection of the myriad lamps and fires of the vast city we were about to enter. Next came a hollow murmur, something like the sound of the sea on our coast; but it soon grew less instinct with the mysterious harmony of the mighty, but most musical, world of waters—it was broken and harsh, and the noise of wheels was easily distinguished. Then we became involved, as it were, in a wilderness of houses; and there was something singularly oppressive in the feeling of immensity and of loneliness that came over me. The heavy vapours which hung dark and dense upon the air, were as if they rose charged with the crime and suffering of the multitudes below; and the faint light was like their feeble endeavours to struggle through the weary weight flung upon existence. How little and how worthless appeared all my own gay schemes and glad anticipations! I shrank from them as if they were a criminal selfishness. But, as you have sometimes said, I have not suffered enough for my fits of despondency to last very long: mine passed away on arriving at my new house—I cannot say home; that word is reserved for my childhood and you—dear, old Meredith Place is still home to me. I was full of eagerness and curiosity, and would fain have snatched a candle from one of the servants, and ran over every room at once. But this was quite contrary to Lord Marchmont's *ideas of the fitness of things*; and he is, as you know, a disciplinarian in small matters.

He has a genius for furniture, and piques himself on screens and arm-chairs.

We arrived three hours later than he intended, and, as the house could not be seen in the precise manner that he wished, he decided that it should not be seen at all till the next day. My own apartment, however, I was allowed to enter; and very pretty, I must say, it is. It is hung with Indian silk, where the brightest of birds, and the gayest of flowers, disport themselves on a white ground. The screens and dressing-table are of black japan, while the mirror is set in exquisite silver filigree work, of which material are also the boxes of my toilette. There are also two large Venetian glasses. Lord Marchmont's picture used to hang in the place of one: he has removed it to the library,—“Taking for granted,” said he, “that you would prefer your own face to mine. Besides, it is too much of a good thing to have both substance and shadow.” The conjugal gallantry was delicate—and true.

I was delighted the next morning when I approached the window: it looks on a small but pleasant garden, opening into the green park. The fine old trees looked like familiar friends. In the distance were the towers of the abbey, bathed with the golden tinge of early morning. I looked towards it, and thought of the happy evenings passed over the clasped volumes in which its annals are recorded. How glad I now am of all that we used to read together! I have now a thousand associations with you and the past, where otherwise there would be none.

My time is divided between visitors and dressmakers. Madame Legarde, the “glass of fashion and the nurse of form,” (*alias* the most fashionable of milliners,) has comfortably assured me that my figure has great merit, and only requires cultivation: this is to be done by tissues, brocades, and laces, which are now scattered round me in charming confusion.

What a duty to one's self it is to be young, vain, and pretty! but the middle quality is the most important. Vanity is a cloak that wraps us up comfortably, and a drapery which sets us off to the best advantage; and its great merit is, that it suits itself to every sort of circumstance.

I have just had an amusing incident happen, very illustrative of my theory. Lord Marchmont gives dinners with a due sense of their importance, and our *chef de cuisine* is a master of the divine art. His late master fought a duel with his most intimate friend, because he found that he had been holding forth strong inducements for Chloe to become his. “My mistress,” said the indignant Amphitryon, “was at his service; but to think of his endeavouring to seduce my cook!” Chloe had, however, a high sense of honour: “A false friend does not deserve me,” was his only reply. The death, however, of Lord C— set him free to an admiring world, and Marchmont was the successful candidate for his favours. Hitherto their harmony has been

perfect—each appreciated the other; and it had been settled between them, that the first dinner after our marriage was to be a triumph.

This morning Chloe sent to ask an audience; it was granted, and he entered my dressing-room.

"Just such a man, so wari, so spiritless,
Drew Priam's curtains in the dead of night,
And came to tell him that his Troy was burn'd."

Chloe is a tall meager-looking individual, just embodying the popular idea of a Frenchman. "*Mon Dieu!* madame!" exclaimed he, all but throwing himself at my feet in the most theatrical of attitudes, (Titus, for example, in a scene of despair with Berenice,) "mine honour is in your hands—I appeal to your feelings—you see before you de most miserable of humanity—*ma glorie* is the sacrifice of his lordship's prejudice! He will not hear reason, but he will hear you."

"Thank you," said I, laughing.

"Ah, madame!" he exclaimed, "I do only mean, that you leave no reason for people to judge with; therefore they must let you judge for them—will you pity me?"

Well, to make short of a long story, told with a broken accent that made it doubly *piquant*, and embellished with gestures equally earnest and grotesque,—I found that the ornaments now used at desserts are on a gigantic scale; and Chloe believed that he had immortalized himself by a representation of the war of the Titans against the gods. Unfortunately, they were higher than even the room; and Lord Marchmont refused to comply with the wishes of the *artiste*, and to take down his splendidly painted ceiling to admit of the dessert. This threw Chloe into an agony: with tears in his eyes, he implored my intercession. "*C'est mon avenir* dat I ask you. I have not slept for nights, filled with my grand project—*mais c'est magnifique!* Will madame fancy the entrance of de giants—taller than de tallest figures at de duke of—vat is dat berry?—ah, de queen's, Queensberry, or gooseberry."

My dear uncle, I behaved like an angel: I did not laugh—I admired the design—I sympathized with the professor's honourable ambition, but suggested a remedy. "A man of your genius," I said, "should despise the beaten track: all you can do with your giants is to have them a little larger than others have had. Invent something fresh—a hint is all that is needed by a man like yourself. Why not introduce pigmies? let us have some mythological device, executed in an exquisite style."

"*Madame est un ange de bonté! je comprends—mais c'est ravissant!* My rivals shall die! Yes, we will have the marriage of Peleus and Thetis in the temple of Solomon. *Je vois tout ce qu'il y a de grand dans votre idée.* De temple shall be of fine spun sugar, and Hymen shall hold a littel torch of scented flame: then de apple flung by de goddess Discord shall be gold."

"Rather ominous," I exclaimed, "for a bridal feast."

"Ah, no! von fine moral lesson; and it

shall be gilded. *Quel plaisir de faire une chose si nouvelle et si subtime!* Madame need not fear that she has intrusted her scheme to an unworthy hand—*je me dévoue à l'exécution.* *Mille graces*—madame has saved my life *et ma gloire.* If she wants the least small *bouillon*, I will always see to it myself."

So saying, he bowed out of the room with an air divided between conscious merit and tender gratitude.

Any subject after this important one must be insipid; I, therefore, bid you good night. God bless you, my dearest uncle!

Your affectionate

HENRIETTA.

LADY MARCHMONT TO SIR JASPER MEREDITH.

Which was the true philosopher?—the sage
Who to the sorrows and the crimes of life
Gave tears—or he who laugh'd at all he saw?
Such mockery is bitter, and yet just:
And Heaven well knows the cause there is to weep.
Methinks that life is what the actor is—
Outside there is the quaint and glib mask;
Beneath, the pale and careworn countenance.

MY DEAR, KIND UNCLE,—I cannot tell you the effect which the sight of your handwriting had upon me. It was the first letter that I ever had from you in my life. How bitterly it reminded me that we were separated! and yet I was very glad to hear from you. I am ashamed to tell you that I cried like a child before I opened it, or rather before I read it: still, it has made me much happier. It reminded me, that there was one person to whom every thing that concerned me was an object of interest; it broke the sense of loneliness that has pressed upon me ever since my arrival.

I do not agree with Mrs. Churchill's sweeping condemnation, "That London is only a great, wicked, expensive place;" but you leave the fairy land of fancy behind you forever, on entering it. It is the most real place in the world; you will inevitably be brought to your level. If I were to quit it now, I should quit not liking it all; no one does who, having country habits, comes up for only a short time. The sense of your own insignificance is any thing but pleasant; then you are hurried through a round of amusements for which you have not acquired a relish, they being, as yet, unconnected with any little personal vanities. You suffer from bodily fatigue, because the exertion is of a kind to which you are unaccustomed; moreover, you feel your own deficiencies, and exaggerate both their importance and the difficulty of overcoming them. But this is only "beginning at the beginning;" and I have a very brilliant perspective—I intend to be so courted, so flattered, and so "beautiful." You will laugh at my making up my mind to the last; but I do assure you that a great deal depends on yourself.

The first step towards establishing pretensions of any kind, is to believe firmly in them yourself: faith is very catching, and half the beauty-reputations of which I hear have originated with the possessors. Having deter-

mined upon being a beauty, it is absolutely necessary that I should have my portrait taken by Sir Godfrey Kneller: a portrait of his is a positive diploma of loveliness.

Among my new acquaintance is Lady Mary Wortley Montague, who is just returned from Constantinople, where her husband was ambassador. She is very handsome, very amusing, and a little alarming. She tells me, very frankly, that she has taken a great liking to me.

"Not, my dear," said she, "that I profess the least friendship for you—friendship is just an innocent delusion, to round a period in a moral essay. I lay it down as a rule, that all men are rascals to women, and all women rascals to each other. Perhaps very young girls, who do not know what to do with a superabundance of affection, run up a kind of romantic liking for each other; but it never lasts—one good-looking young man would break up all the female friendships that ever were formed. In our secret heart we all hate each other. What I shall expect from you is a little pleasant companionship; and I offer you the same in return."

My protestations of "so flattered," and "too happy," were interrupted by her continuing:—"The fact is, we have each the charm of novelty. I know everybody, and shall put them in the worst possible point of view. I shall, therefore, be both useful and agreeable. You at present know nobody, and will like to hear all about them—especially to know the worst: of course, therefore, you will be a good listener. Now, a good listener is the most fascinating of companions. In time, I shall have told all I have to tell, and you will have heard all that you care to hear: then our bond of union ceases; and so will our friendship, unless we can in any way make a convenience of each other."

Well, I have made a plunge into the cold bath of her ladyship's acquaintance, and she accompanied me to Sir Godfrey's. It was quite a visit of canvassing, for he has almost given up his profession; it is a favour if he paints you. Lady Mary told me some amusing anecdotes. Among others, she repeated to me a conversation between him and Pope, who called on a visit of condolence during a severe fit of illness. The poet, by way of comfort, gave him every prospect of going to heaven. "Ver good place," replied the invalid, "but I wish *le bon Dieu* would let me stay in my new house—it is good enough for me."

One day, Gay was reading to him a most outrageous panegyric, in which he ascribed to Kneller every virtue under the sun—perhaps a few more. Sir Godfrey heard him with great complacency, only interrupting him by a few approving nods, or a "by Gott, sare, you say de truth." At the close, he highly applauded the performance, but said, "You have done well, *Mistere Gay*—ver well, as far as you have gone; but you have left me out one great quality. It is good for de Duke of Marlborough, that was I not a soldier, and

his enemy. Once, when I was such a littel boy, I was on St. Mark's Place in Venice, and dey let off some fireworks. By Gott, I liked de smell of de gunpowder! Ah! sare, I should have made von great general—I should have killed men instead of making dem discontent vith demselves, as my pictures do."

Sir Godfrey is a little, shrewd looking old man, with manners courteous even to kindness. He received us with the greatest *empressment*, and was in excellent humour, having just received a haunch of venison from one of the principal auctioneers. "There," he exclaimed, in a tumult of soft emotion, "is a goot man! He loves me—see what beautiful fat is on his venison!"

A few judicious remarks, while he was showing us his pictures, placed me high in his favour; but my last compliment was the climax.

"I am," said I, in a tone of the most modest hesitation, "afraid, Sir Godfrey, to sit to you. I shall be discontented with my looking-glass for the rest of my life."

"Mine Gott!" exclaimed he, "your ladyship has a genius for de fine arts—you taste, you feel dem. But do not be afraid—you shall only look your best; your picture vill teach you de duty you owe to yourself—you must try to look like it."

I thanked him for the glorious ambition which he thus set before me; and we took our leave, saying a profusion of fine things to each other.

You see, my dear uncle, I write to you in the most merciless manner: I spare you nothing that happens to me. At least, details only kept in mind for your sake will show my dearest, kindest uncle, how affectionately he is remembered by his

Grateful and devoted

HENRIETTA.

P. S. Lord Marchmont, whenever he sees me writing, sends you a message of equal length and civility. Once named, it will do for always. You can keep it by you like a stock of frozen provision.

CHAPTER VII.

Few know of life's beginnings—men behold
The goal achieved. The warrior, when his sword
Flashes red triumph in the noonday sun;
The poet, when his lyre hangs on the palm;
The statesman, when the crowd proclaim his voice
And mould opinion on his gifted tongue:
They count not life's first steps, and never think
Upon the many miserable hours
When hope deferr'd was sickness to the heart.
They reckon not the battle and the march,
The long privations of a wasted youth;
They never see the banner till unfurled.
What are to them the solitary nights,
Past pale and anxious by the sickly lamp,
Till the young poet wins the world at last,
To listen to the music long his own?
The crowd attend the statesman's fiery mind
That makes their destiny; but they do not trace
His struggle, or his long expectancy.
Hard are life's early steps; and, but that youth
Is buoyant, confident, and strong in hope,
Men would behold its threshold, and despair

UNDER what different aspects may the same place appear! Walter Maynard arrived in

London on the same night with Lady Marchmont. He stopped at an inn suiting his finances. It was in a dark, narrow lane in the city; and the young traveller sat down in the public room, where he was half stifled by the smoke, and half deafened by the noise. What a feeling of desolation, and of vastness, had struck upon his heart as he passed through a few of those crowded streets of which there seemed no ending! It seemed impossible but that, amid so many faces, there must be one that he knew: but, no; all alike were strangers. He felt himself utterly alone; and, for the first time, shrank when he considered how slender were his resources. A small sum of money, a letter of introduction to Sir Jasper Meredith's bookseller, and a card of address where to find Norbourne Courtenaye when he happened to be in London,—these were his all. He pushed aside his frugal meal with utter distaste, and looked round on his companions: at once he felt all conversation with them to be hopeless. He listened to the conversation of the two men next him, who were quarrelling over, rather than discussing, the "Craftsman," which they had just been reading. Both were so decidedly wrong, that it was hardly possible for human nature at twenty-two to avoid setting them right. The consequence was, that the one called him a fool, and the other offered to fight him. A mild, respectable looking man interfered, and, pacifying the combatants, drew Walter into a corner, and began conversing with him pleasantly enough. The conversation was only a little interrupted by glances from the pretty hostess, who seemed anxious to attract the attention of the handsome young stranger.

"Why, it is later than I thought," exclaimed the stranger, as the clock struck. "Good night, my young friend—I dare say we shall meet again; and let me give you a word of parting advice—never interfere with what does not concern you."

A few minutes after his departure, Walter found that his purse was gone.

"I thought how it would be," cried the landlady; "but I could not catch your eye. Why, the man you were talking to is a first rate pickpocket—a very clever man. Let me give you a piece of good advice: always be on your guard against strangers; you may be sure that everybody wants to take you in."

It is amazing how well the hostess contrived, during the two or three days that Walter remained in the house, to illustrate her theory by practice. Weary and dispirited, Walter retired to the little, close chamber which was his bedroom. One must be uncomfortable to be thoroughly out of sorts. A great sorrow forgets every thing but itself; but little sorrows exaggerate themselves and each other.

As yet our traveller had to contend with only the smaller order. He sat down in the window-seat, in a most profitless mood of dejection. More than once the sweet face of Ethel rose to his mind's eye; but he glanced round his chamber and dismissed it. He was

ashamed of thinking of her in such a position; he felt, with morbid sensitiveness, the social distinction between them. The wings of his fancy seemed to melt, like those of Icarus, now that he approached the sun of his hopes, London. The air of the narrow chamber grew more and more oppressive, and he flung open the window, which looked into a churchyard. The moonlight fell over the white stones which press so heavily on the dust beneath.

"The last churchyard I looked upon," exclaimed Walter, "how different was it from this! There the sweet influences of nature shed their own beauty over the presence of death. The wild flowers sprung up amid the grass; the dew shone on the leaves; and the murmurs of a nameless music stirred the sweeping branches of the oak. Here, all is harsh and artificial: the palpable weight of human care seems upon the thick atmosphere. The very dead are crowded together, and crushed beneath the weight of those dreary-looking stones. "Ah!" exclaimed he, as he turned, with a cold shudder, from the window, "I hope I shall never be buried in a city."

CHAPTER VIII.

ARRIVED AT HOME.

A pale and stately lady, with a brow
That might have well becom'd a Roman dame,
Cornelia, ere her glorious children died;
Or that imperial mother, who beheld
Her son forgive his country at her word.
Yet there was trouble written on her face;
The past had left its darkness.

It was a wretched evening on which Norbourne Courtenaye reached his home. A cold wind, a piercing rain, and a bad road, with a worse hack, (for his own horses had been knocked up,) rendered more acute the misery which he, as a parted lover, was bound to feel. He felt himself more unhappy at every succeeding mile; and when he arrived—wet through, cold, tired, and hungry—he conceived, very justly, that he was the most unhappy of created beings. Still, it was almost worth while to endure all these sufferings for the sake of such a welcome as awaited him at home. A good fire, and a good dinner, are wonderful restoratives; and Mrs. Courtenaye was so happy at seeing her son again, that he could not but feel happy too. She hung round him, watching his every look as if she grudged the veriest menial offices from the servants; and she almost scolded him for not eating, when he had done justice enough to the good things set before him to have satisfied even the cook herself. Some old writer says, "we like to see those we love eating and sleeping;" and there is much truth in the homely remark. We like them to be the objects of our active care, or of our patient watchfulness.

Mrs. Courtenaye idolized her son, with that intense love which a reserved and proud temper feels for the one and only object on which it lavishes all its hoarded affection. His

ther had died when his only child was but two years old; and to that child his young, rich, and beautiful widow, had been wholly devoted. Many suiters she certainly had; but even the wildest jest had never given one of them a hope of success. It was said that she spoiled her son—it was not so. Her strong sense and excellent judgment preserved her authority; which was strengthened, not weakened, by the tenderest care that ever mother bestowed on orphan. From her lips, a reproof was sufficient punishment; for the boy well knew that he was the least sufferer.

Mrs. Courtenaye was rather respected than popular in the neighbourhood: her habits were secluded, though no one dispensed more liberally that hospitality which suited their position in the country. She was of an old Catholic Scotch family, and had been educated in a Spanish convent, which she never left till her marriage with Mr. Courtenaye. Some said that her union with a heretic weighed upon her mind, and that her penances were of an unusually strict order. There was that in her still fine, but careworn features, which seemed to bear out the assertion. She was subject to fits of deep melancholy; and, even in her most social hours, there was a sort of subdued sadness in her eyes; and she never had the glad, frank manner of one whose heart is at ease. Her very fondness for her son had something mournful in it; she seemed to fear the indulgence of all earthly affections. Still, nothing could be more perfect than the union of herself and her child. It was touching to see them together; for, if this cold world has one tie more holy, and more redeemed from all selfish feeling than another, it is that which binds the widow and the orphan together.

His dress changed, and his dinner over, Norbourn followed Mrs. Courtenaye to the drawing-room, where she had left his uncle and cousin. Their way lay through the hall, where hung the helm of many a bold forefather, and arms that had seen service even in the crusades.

"I cannot help, dearest mother," said he, half seriously, half smiling, "having a little respect for myself when I return home. My noble ancestors have bequeathed to me an honourable name:—well, I will at least strive not to disgrace it." Mrs. Courtenaye fondly pressed his hand, and he could see that the tears stood in her eyes. "I should rather have said," exclaimed he, "I will at least try to be worthy of my mother."

They found Lord Norbourn so engaged with a heap of political pamphlets, that he did not at first perceive their entrance. When he did, he welcomed his nephew with great cordiality,—we should rather say courtesy, for Lord Norbourn had never been cordial in his life. He hurried together questions and compliments.

"On my honour, Mrs. Courtenaye, you will make me an advocate for petticoat government, after such a specimen of its excellent influence. Still, my young friend, I am like the

rest of the world—cannot leave well alone—must have you up to town. Sir Robert was inquiring about the representative of our house, only the other day. I, you know, am but a younger brother. But I forget that you have not seen your cousin for an age. You young people must have an immense deal to talk over. There, Norbourn, I consign you to younger and fairer hands."

So saying, he resumed his seat and his pamphlets, in which he appeared completely absorbed. Mrs. Courtenaye took up a religious work, and she, too, turned her face away. Her eyes were resolutely fixed on the page, but she saw it not. Her cheek was pale and cold as marble, and there was that convulsive quiver about the mouth which is the most certain sign of mental agitation.

Norbourn drew kindly towards his cousin Constance. He had for her the affection of early habit, and the tenderness of pity. Delicate and slightly deformed, with only one surviving parent, whose affection chiefly showed itself in ambitious projects for her aggrandizement, there was much in Constance's position that awakened the softest compassion. When Norbourn entered the room, a deep flush of crimson betrayed how instantly she recognised him. The colour had faded, but enough remained to make her look almost pretty; and, if any thing can make a woman look so, it is the presence of him she loves. Poor Constance loved her cousin timidly; for, painfully conscious of her personal defects, she was shy and retiring. During the lives of her sisters, she had been thrown quite in the background; and her cousin had been the only one from whom she had always received support and consideration. How gratefully does a woman repay such a debt!

Norbourn Courtenaye was the only person with whom Constance was at her ease. During the lifetime of her beautiful sisters, she had met with so many mortifications, that she shrank from all general society; and she had been too secluded, during the last twelve-month, to know the merits and charms which would inevitably be found in Lord Norbourn's heiress. Of her father she stood in great awe, and of her aunt scarcely less; to which was also added a sense of strangeness. But Norbourn she had known from a child: he had taken her part as a boy, and as a young man, had never neglected her; her memory was stored with a thousand slight attentions which he had himself forgotten. After the first flutter of conscious delight which his entrance had caused, she was able to talk to him cheerfully, and her spirits rose with the unwonted enjoyment.

It may be doubted whether Lord Norbourn was quite as much engrossed by his pamphlets as he appeared; for once or twice, as his daughter's laugh reached his ear, his stern features relaxed into a smile, which changed the whole expression of his face. More than once, too, he tried to catch Mrs. Courtenaye's eye; but she was too much absorbed in her

book. Norbourne, it must be confessed, was impatient for the close of the evening: he had so much that he wished to tell his mother, and it struck him that she looked unusually pale and harassed. Still his cousin's claims, as a woman and his guest, were imperative; and, moreover, he felt for a young creature, shut out from so many ordinary sources of enjoyment, and whose life was so solitary. But never had she appeared so utterly uninteresting as now; for Ethel's sweet face shone before him, a sad contrast to the sickly and languid countenance of Constance. Neither had Constance the natural talents of Ethel; she was deficient in all powers of conversation. Accustomed to be repressed and neglected, she lacked courage to say what she thought. What a change from the sweet, uncurbed vivacity of Ethel, whose thoughts sprang directly from the heart into utterance! At length, however, the evening wore away; and, after kindly assisting his cousin across the gallery, Norbourne hurried to his mother's dressing-room: she was just going in, as he asked admission to tell all his adventures.

"Not to-night, my beloved child; you must be tired: not to-night."

She leant forward to kiss his forehead: he started at the touch, for her lips were cold as ice.

CHAPTER IX.

DIFFERENT VIEWS OF YOUTH AND AGE.

There was a shadow on his face, that spake
Of passion long since harden'd into thought.
He had a smile, a cold and scornful smile;
Not gayety, not sweetness, but the sign
Of feelings moulded at their master's will.
A weary world was hidden at that heart;
Sorrow and strife were there, and it had learnt
The weary lessons time and sorrow teach;
And deeply felt itself the vanity
Of love and hope, and now could only feel
Distrust in them, and mockery for those
Who could believe in what he knew was vain.

It was with a natural touch of pride that Norbourne Courtenaye paced his paternal hall, while waiting for his uncle, with whom he was going to ride. It was one of those fine specimens of Norman architecture which yet attest the taste of that stately race. It was lined with oak, long since black with age, richly carved in all the quaint devices of art, then in its childhood; but the arms of the family, the crest, and the motto, were conspicuous everywhere. Around were those memorials to which time gives such value—several complete suits of armour, each belonging to some honourable name, whose deeds were the theme of legendary story. The dark plumes yet waved over each helmet, the slight feather outlasting the stalwart warrior on whose head it had once danced: a fragile thing, yet more enduring than its master. There were stands, too, of curious arms—some strange and foreign-looking eastern cimeters, whose crooked steel had been brought from Palestine: others, of a more recent date, had

equally their history. There were the short heavy carbines, and the richly mounted pistols, which had done their duty in the parliamentary wars, when the Courtenayes followed the fortunes of the ill-fated Charles. The gallant history came down to the present time; for there were the colours which his father had taken from a French battery with his own hands, at the battle of Blenheim, and for which he received the thanks of Marlborough.

The Gothic windows of painted glass

"Taught light to counterfeit a gloom;"

and the rich purple and yellow dyes fell, in gorgeous confusion, on the relics around. A magnificent prospect lay beyond. On one side, you could see only the vast extent of park, whose oaks might have served as temples to the druids: deer were feeding on the sunny slopes; and on a noble lake you saw the glittering of the morning light on the white wings of the swans. On the south side, the view was more varied: fields and orchards were obviously in a state of high cultivation; and a church, built by his grandfather, crowned the hill. Below, cottages peeped from among the trees, realizing all the painter could have wished of quiet and cheerfulness. The view stretched away like a panorama, lost in the gray and misty tints which mingle with the sunshine of an October morning. Far as the eye could reach all was his own: his forefathers had built those cottages, had planted those trees. He could not look around without the consciousness of power.

I frankly confess that I have a respect for family pride. If it be a prejudice, it is prejudice in its most picturesque shape; but I hold that it is connected with some of the noblest feelings in our nature. Is it nothing to be connected with the history of one's country, and to feel

The name of every noble ancestor
A bond upon your soul against disgrace!

No one who admits the rule, can deny its exceptions; but I believe the pride of blood to have a beneficial influence. It is much to feel, that the high and the honourable belong to a name that is pledged to the present by recollections of the past.

It would have been difficult to find a finer specimen of the English aristocracy than the handsome and intelligent young man on whom his uncle's eye had fixed on entering. There was something peculiar in that gaze. It was obviously one of pride in its object; but there was also sadness, which gradually changed into an expression of harsh determination. There was something, however, contagious in the glad, frank greeting of his nephew; something, too, in the soft clear morning air, that Lord Norbourne could not quite resist. He sprang on horseback with a feeling of vague enjoyment, which he was as little as any man in the habit of experiencing.

"Whither shall we ride," said he, after

they had cantered a little distance over the soft grass of the park. The influence of custom, that second nature, stronger even than the first, was upon him; he had enjoyed himself quite enough—he now wanted an object. “There is a splendid view from those hills, or —”

Here Norbourne was interrupted by his uncle laughing much louder than he often permitted himself to do.

“Why, my dear boy,” exclaimed he, “what have you ever seen in me to imagine I cared for any prospect that did not terminate in Whitehall? Green trees and blue skies are very well in their way; I believe indispensable to painters, and useful to poets: I was not aware that I figured in either department.”

“No one ever suspected, or even accused you of such proceedings,” replied Norbourne, smiling at the idea of his lordship in either capacity; but can you not understand enjoying the country for its own sake?”

“No, I cannot,” replied his companion, drily.

“Is it possible?” cried his nephew, eagerly. “I cannot ride along, this lovely morning, without a thrill of delight. My whole frame seems lighter; a thousand subtle influences excite my spirits; I catch beauties I never saw before, and long for some one to admire with me.”

“All this,” replied the other, “only proves what a good constitution you have, and that you are very young. I dare say you will grow more rational in time.”

“More rational!” cried Norbourne; “nay, now, I have all the high authorities. Is not this delicious quiet, this serenity of rural enjoyment, the one admitted happiness of human existence; that which the statesman craves, and the philosopher holds forth, as the golden secret of life?”

“Statesmen and philosophers too,” replied Lord Norbourne, “often talk a great deal of nonsense. Half of what are called our finest sentiments originate in the necessity of rounding a sentence. Lord Bolingbroke writes, with an eloquence which would make an enthusiast rave, about the dignity and delight of retirement: I do not find that he intrigues with one atom less of activity to obtain a place in the ministry.”

“Do you know him?” asked Norbourne, eagerly.

“Ah! he is one of your idols, I suppose,” said Lord Norbourne, with a slight approach to a sneer. “Youth is prone to admire; but it is odd how, in a few years, we discover the defects of our demigods. At first we look only to the head of the image, which is of gold: we soon find the necessity of looking down to earth, were it but to find out our path; and then we discover that our idol has feet of clay!”

“Is there no such thing as excellence?” exclaimed his listener.

“Very far from it. I admit that there are a great many excellent things in this world; *Sir Robert's last measures*, for example,” re-

turned his uncle, half smiling. “I would only warn you against youth's usual error of believing and expecting too much—not that I expect you to take my warning. I do not often give advice; first, because it is a bad habit that of giving any thing; and, secondly, because I always think of the ambassador's answer to Oliver's declaration, ‘that if the court of Spain cut off his head, he would send them the heads of every Spaniard in his dominions.’ ‘Yes, please your highness,’ returned the diplomatist, ‘but among them all there may not be one to fit my shoulders.’ In like manner, with all our choice of other people's experience, there is never any that suits us but our own.”

“In the mean time,” said Norbourne, “we have arrived at the park gate, and have not determined whither we shall ride.”

“Crowded cities please me then,
And the busy scenes of men.”

“For ‘then,’ substitute ‘always,’ and Milton has just expressed my sentiments,” replied his uncle. The ‘crowded cities’ are unattainable, but there are still ‘the busy haunts of men.’ Let us go and call on some of our neighbours. After all, the country may be interesting when there is a rumor of a general election.”

CHAPTER X.

Ah! waking dreams, that mock the day,
Have other ends than those
That come beneath the moonlight ray
And charm the eyes they close.

The vision, colouring the night,
Mid bloom and brightness wakes,
Banished by morning's cheerful light,
Which brightens what it breaks.

But dreams, which fill the waking eye
With deeper spells than sleep,
When hours unnumber'd pass us by;
From such we wake and weep.

We wake, but not to sleep again,
The heart has lost its youth;
The morning light that wakes us then,
Cold, calm, and stern, is truth.

NORBOURNE was amply repaid for giving up his gallop over the hills, by the curious study which his uncle presented. He was astonished at the facility with which Lord Norbourne seemed to divine the character of each individual, and how he contrived to adapt himself to it. He avoided politics, and yet often managed to make Sir Robert Walpole the subject of discourse; but it was only to tell some favourable personal anecdote. Once or twice he was fairly entangled in an argument; and each time he allowed himself to be convinced on some minor point, which left, however, the original subject quite untouched.

An allusion to some pamphlet, which had just made a noise, induced Norbourne to mention Walter Maynard to his uncle in terms of warm praise.

“He realizes,” exclaimed he, warmly, “all one ever imagines of genius. He has the keenest sensibility, and this gives him the key to the sensibility of others. He is elo-

uent, for his heart is in his words; and he as that passionate melancholy which is the true element of poetry."

"Say no more," interrupted Lord Norbourne; "you have described the man of all others the most unfitted to struggle with the actual world. His sensibility will make him live to a thousand annoyances, which would be scarcely perceptible to one of colder mould; his eloquence will obtain just admiration enough to deceive him; and his melancholy only asks a few years' experience to deepen into utter despondency. Still, give me his own address; I will, if I can, serve any friend of yours."

"He has wonderful talents," continued his friend.

"Talents," resumed Lord Norbourne, "of this high and imaginative order, seem to me either given to benefit others than their possessor. Their harvest is in the future, not the present. Their brains produce the golden ore, which commoner hands mould to the daily purposes of life."

"I think," replied the young advocate, unwilling to give up a point in which his feelings were interested, "that even you would believe in Walter Maynard's success in life, if you knew him. What has brought the world to its present state, but individual talent?"

"I do not deny your assertion," said his uncle; "but minds of the higher order are not the best suited to ordinary use. I cannot express my meaning better than by using a simile of our opponent, the Irish dean. Swift says,—'take a finely polished razor, and you will waste your labour in getting through a ream of paper, which you need to cut: a coarse bone knife will answer your purpose much better.'" Now, your fine-minded man is the razor, and I leave you to make the application."

"Well," replied Courtenaye, "I commend him to your kindness, and beg you to put your judgment out of the question."

"A very common method of acting in this life. But," continued Lord Norbourne, "you can form wishes for a friend—have you none for yourself? I am amazed to see a young man of your appearance and talents—though, after I have been thus depreciating the latter, it is almost an affront to say any thing about those you possess—I am amazed to see you regretting among your own oaks, as if, like them, growth were your only value."

"I often visit London," replied Norbourne.

"Yes," interrupted his uncle, with something between a smile and a sneer, "to decide on the merits of rival actresses; to bear away a few *bon-mots* from the coffee-houses; to see that the fashion of your hair is not too much behind hand; and to choose the newest embroidery for your waistcoat."

Norbourne coloured; for there was, at least, truth enough in the description to make it some home.

"As little do I think that your country pursuits deserve to engross your time. Life was

given for something better than sitting after fish, walking after birds, and riding after hares."

"As well, my dear uncle," said Courtenaye, laughing, "as tying up your whole life with red tape."

Lord Norbourne smiled.

"We will not try any more attempts at wit. Wit only gains you the reputation of being hardhearted, which it is very well to be in reality, but not to have the reputation of being. It shocks people's little innocent prejudices, and these I always respect when I can. Indeed, the only character I ever found of any use to man, was that of having no character at all."

"That is the very fault I find with your faction," exclaimed his hearer, eagerly. "It is too much the fashion to decry all lofty moral purpose, to disbelieve in public virtue, and to destroy all high excellence by a crushing disbelief in its excellence."

"That is to say," answered his uncle, calmly, "that Sir Robert knows the world, instead of imagining it: he deals with facts, not sentiments. But I will speak seriously, for it is a subject on which I wish you both to think and act. Look at the results of the Walpole administration—peace and prosperity. We are feared abroad, and tranquil at home. You may easily find finer theories than ours, but I appeal to our practice."

Norbourne remained in attentive silence; while his uncle's quick eye noted the impression he had made, and then continued:—

"You might do any thing with your undecided neighbourhood, and your position points you out as its leader. Ah! I wish that you had the political eagerness of Sir Robert's younger son, Horace; who, hearing some one, during a dispute, say, 'Why, we have opinions enough on our side to form a sect!' exclaimed,—'but have you enough to form a party?'"

CHAPTER XI.

OPINIONS.

He scorn'd them from the centre of his heart,
For well he knew mankind; and he who knows
Must loathe or pity. He who dwells apart,
With books, and nature, and philosophy,
May lull himself with pity; he who dwells
In crowds and cities, struggling with his race,
Must daily see their falsehood and their faults,
Their cold ingratitude, their selfishness:
How can he choose but loathe them?

At any other time, Norbourne Courtenaye would have been delighted at his uncle's visit; which, had it been but six months sooner, would have presented a very different aspect. Lord Norbourne was one of those men who made it his boast, that he had succeeded in whatever he undertook. We beg his lordship's pardon; he never boasted of any thing: he knew fortune too well to tempt her by a defiance. No two people are more different in outward seeming, than a man sometimes

grows to differ from himself. Twenty-five and fifty are epochs which bear no resemblance. In the reserved, cautious, yet bland and insinuating statesman, no one could have recognised the gay, wild, and extravagant young man that Lord Norbourne had once been. A younger brother, he had been the architect of his own fortunes; and having one's own way to make in the world is not the best possible method towards giving a good opinion of it. One by one Lord Norbourne had left behind him the generous belief, the warm affection, and the elevated sentiment. If he now thought at all about them, it was only to think how much, and how often, they had been imposed upon. The fault of his system was, that he gave the head an undue preponderance over the heart. It was the inevitable result of his experience: there are no weaknesses which we so thoroughly despise as those to which ourselves have yielded; and no faults strike us so forcibly as our own, when they are past.

The same process leads to different results. Sir Jasper Meredith hated mankind, Lord Norbourne only despised them; the one had exaggerated his feelings in solitude, the other had dispersed them in society; the one shrunk from his fellows, the other delighted in making them his tools: the sense of superiority was thus gratified in both. Sir Jasper undervalued worldly honours: Lord Norbourne even over-estimated their advantages. The difference lay in this: Sir Jasper had led a life of wild adventure in foreign lands; seeking excitement for excitement's sake; gaining riches by lucky chances; and, wearied out both in mind and body, sinking into solitude at last, while he gathered round him all the bitterest recollections of the past. Lord Norbourne, on the contrary, had led a life of business, in the same city and same court; he had taken his daily lessons in small intrigues for smaller ends.

The success and the disappointment alike belonged to the one aim—worldly success. He ended with being rich, a peer, and in the minister's confidence; while the insecurity which, in a government like ours, attends political elevation, kept away any approach to satiety. He had not gone through life without learning its many bitter lessons; but the moral he drew from them was a sneer. Moreover, the habits of business are the most enduring of any; and Lord Norbourne's most positive enjoyment was in what are called the fatigues of office. Still he lingered in the country, and every day his nephew took greater delight in his society. There was something very flattering to the self-love of any young man in the easy confidence of one so distinguished, and usually so reserved. The polished misanthropy, too, of Lord Norbourne's sarcasm was delightful to one who felt in his own heart the deep enjoyment of disbelief.

It was an unusually mild and lovely evening that they were loitering on the banks of the lake. The sun was just setting—a conqueror *as he went down; for every cloud that had*

flitted about during the day, now gathered on the west, mantling with crimson and gold. There was something triumphal in the rich colouring that arrayed every object. The vivid green of the oaks stood out more distinct amid the scarlet of the sycamore and the yellow of the thyme, together with the rich brown that was covering the chestnuts. The grass, too, of the park was in strong contrast to the purple heath that clothed the distance, only broken by the blossoming furze, which intersected it like a golden sea: a faint perfume came on the air, more subtle even than the breath of flowers; it was like the last sigh of each falling leaf, that flitted by noiseless as a ghost.

To me there is no season so lovely as the autumn. There is a gayety about the spring with which I have no sympathy: its perpetual revival of leaf and bloom is too great a contrast to the inner world, where so many feelings lie barren, and so many hopes withered. There is an activity about it, from which the wearied spirits shrink; and a joyousness, which but makes you turn more sadly upon yourself; but about autumn there is a tender melancholy inexpressibly soothing; decay is around, but such is in your own heart. There is a languor in the air which encourages your own, and the poetry of memory is in every drooping flower and falling leaf. The very magnificence of its Assyrian array is touched with the light of imagination: even while you watch it, it passes away as your brightest hopes have done before.

The lake, on whose bank Courtenaye and his uncle were standing, was just then an object of singular beauty. The sky was reflected in its depths in huge masses of crimson shadow, which softened away into a deep purple mirror, clear and motionless, saving when the swans swept slowly across, leaving behind a vein of violet light.

"Can you," said Norbourne, "be quite insensible to the beauty of a scene like this? It enters into my very heart: I feel a kindlier disposition to the whole human race."

"Nay, nay," exclaimed Lord Norbourne. "I cannot go quite so far as that. I have, thanks to your hospitality, laid in a stock of health enough for the ensuing winter: but as to the general benevolence of which you talk, I confess I find no symptoms: if I did, they would alarm me more than those of the gout."

"But, my dear uncle," asked his young hearer, is it not a pleasanter thing to think well of one's species?"

"Pleasanter, I grant you," replied his uncle; "but one always pays for one's pleasures. Now I am arrived at an age when one grows economical on that head. I do not agree with Waller, who says,

'Surely the pleasure is as great
In being cheated as to cheat.'

At all events, there is small enjoyment in being cheated with one's eyes open, which would be my present case. My opinion of my kind is couched in St. Simon's answer to Louis XIV.—'Is there any thing,' asked the

‘that you despise more than men?’ s, replied the duke,—‘woman.’”
I had hoped,” said Norbourne, “that you some soft relents in favour of the fairer”

Not I,” answered Lord Norbourne; “wo- have all our faults, heightened by a hood and inconsistency peculiarly their. You may make a man understand his interests; now, a woman you never can. ill materials with which it may be my fate to work, I especially abjure and abhor anciful.”

Really, my dear uncle, you make me uncomfortable,” exclaimed Courtenaye, hing. “Do you not even believe in

es,” was the reply,—“as I do in the hoop-ough, or the measles; as a sort of juve- disease to be got over as soon as possible. ung people would but consider,—a thing h young people never do,—they would that love is its own cure. Gratified, it of satiety; ungratified, of forgetfulness. any man, in the course of a few years, back upon the most desperate passion ver experienced, and he will find himself only cured, but ashamed of it.”
Norbourne walked on in silence: he felt teenly to like to speak of his feelings. hrunk from mentioning his engagement s uncle. It was almost sacrilege to men- Ethel’s name with a chance even of sar- i or of blame.

—“Cato’s a proper person
To intrust a love tale with!”

He kept his thoughts “in their sweet si-;,” and when Lord Norbourne returned e house, long did he linger by that lonely h, recalling a thousand looks and words h, lovely as they seemed at the time, even lovelier thus remembered. What ssible things inconstancy or indifference are to Norbourne! Never did young hipper more devoutly believe in the di- y of love.

For nothing in this wide world would I up my sweet Ethel.” It was almost like ng with herself when he left the lake side.

CHAPTER XII.

DIFFICULTIES.

I do not ask to offer thee
A timid love like mine;
I lay it, as the rose is laid,
On some immortal shrine.

I have no hope in loving thee,
I only ask to love;
I brood upon my silent heart,
As on its nest the dove.

But little have I been beloved,
Sad, silent, and alone;
And yet I feel, in loving thee,
The wide world is mine own.

Thine is the name I breathe to Heaven,
Thy face is on my sleep;
I only ask that love like this
May pray for thee and weep.

GREENABLE 28 Norbourne Courtenaye found
mole’s society, he could not but perceive

that it operated, in some strange way, as a restraint upon his mother. For the first time in her life she avoided all his attempts at obtaining an hour’s quiet conversation. She kept herself almost entirely to her own apartments; and when she made her appearance at table, it was with a worn and haggard countenance, and a frame that her son could see wasting before his very eyes. All Lord Norbourne’s efforts to draw her into conversation were vain: she would start and turn pale if he suddenly addressed her; though, the moment after she would recover herself, and evince absolute anxiety to address him. Norbourne was convinced that there was some secret; and the deep respect and affection he felt for a parent who had been every thing to him, made him reluctant to inquire into aught that she might wish concealed. Yet what possible mystery could there be? He was fretted and irresolute. Besides, what would Ethel think of his silence?

Another cause for embarrassment began to occasion him considerable uneasiness. He found that the report of his marriage with his cousin was universal. That, however, was of small consequence, compared with a consciousness, that daily forced itself upon him, of a preference on the part of that cousin. It would be too cruel to encourage such a fancy for a moment. He could not but perceive that the faint colour never visited her pale cheek but when he spoke to her; that her eyes unconsciously followed him; and that the slightest opinion he expressed became, from that moment, hers.

One morning he had admired the perfume of a rare flower which she had in her hand. A taste for flowers had been among her few enjoyments, and her father had indulged this taste at a most lavish cost: the hothouse at Norbourne park was the admiration of the country. The next morning he found the room he deemed peculiarly his own, filled with plants of the same description. Constance had sent to the park for them. There was nothing in the attention beyond that ready kindness which is so essentially feminine; but the manner in which she received his acknowledgements was much: there was an embarrassment so far beyond the occasion, and a happiness not less obvious because it was rather betrayed than confessed. But Norbourne himself loved, and love has a ready sympathy with love.

Love is a new intelligence entered into the being; it is the softest, but the most subtle light; in all experience it deceives itself; but how many truths does it teach,—how much knowledge does it impart! It makes us alive to a thousand feelings, of whose very existence, till then, we had not dreamed. The poet’s page has a new magic: we comprehend all that had before seemed graceful exaggeration; we now find that poetry falls short of what it seeks to express; and we take a new delight in the musical language that seems made for tenderness.

Even into philosophy is carried the deeper

truth of the heart—and how many inconsistencies are at once understood! We grow more indulgent, more pitying; and one sweet weakness of our own leads to so much indulgence for others. We doubt, however, whether the term weakness be not misapplied in this case. If there be one emotion that redeems our humanity by stirring all that is generous and unselfish within us, that awakens all the poetry of our nature, and that makes us believe in that heaven of which it bears the likeness, it is love: love, spiritual, devoted, and eternal; love, that softens the shadow of the valley of death, to welcome us after to its own and immortal home. Some Greek poet says,—“What does he know who has not suffered?” He might have asked,—“What does he know who has not loved?” Alas! both questions are synonymous. God help the heart that breaks with its after knowledge!

How sad seemed the lot of a young girl, touched by all the keen susceptibilities of youth, full of gentle and shrinking tenderness, fated to be unreturned! Nothing can compensate to a woman for the want of exterior attraction. There is a nameless fascination about beauty, which seems, like all fairy gifts, crowded into one. It wins without an effort, and obtains credit for possessing every thing else. How many mortifications, from its very cradle, has the displeasing exterior to endure! To be unloved—what a fate for a woman whose element is love!

Poor Constance was originally pretty: the outline of the features was still graceful, but long sickness had contracted, and given an expression of suffering: while all colouring had faded into a cold white. The eyes were heavy, and their naturally soft blue was dim and faded before its time. Her figure was slight; but the cruel accident—a fall in her childhood, which had laid the foundation of her ill-health—had made her a little aside, and caused a degree of lameness, which rendered it difficult for her to move without assistance. The only positive beauty she possessed was a profusion of hair of the softest gold, which gave the pale face around which it hung almost the likeness of a spirit. What a contrast to the bright and blooming image of Ethel Churchill, which was treasured in Norbourne's memory!

CHAPTER XIII.

A PROPOSAL OF MARRIAGE.

What mockeries are our most firm resolves!
To will is ours, but not to execute.
We map our future like some unknown coast,
And say, “Here is an harbour, here a rock—
The one we will attain, the other shun!”
And we do neither. Some chance gale springs up
And bears us far o’er some unfathom’d sea.
Our efforts are all vain; at length we yield
To winds and waves, that laugh at man’s control.

The next morning there was more restraint than usual at the breakfast table. Norbourne

was amazed that, though his mother had refused, on the excuse of a headache, his petition for an interview, she had afterwards received Lord Norbourne, and their conversation had lasted nearly two hours. That its effect had been a sleepless night, at least, to Mrs. Courtenaye, was obvious from her haggard appearance; and her hand was so unsteady, that it was with difficulty she raised her cup to her lips. There was something, too, in Lord Norbourne's face that expressed anxiety; though his set brow and contracted lip, marked determination. Scarcely did his quiet and restrained manner give outward sign of what was working within. He would have conversed as usual; but his attempts were so ill-seconded, that he was fain to take refuge in the letters that lay beside him. Courtenaye himself was lost in thought. What could be the meaning of his mother's restraint and suffering—her reluctance to see himself? What could be the cause of estrangement between a parent and child, hitherto so united? One only cause presented itself. Could there be a second marriage in the case? But the thought was rejected even as it rose; it was like sacrilege: so haughty, so cold, so devoted to himself—it was impossible.

But Norbourne's was no temper to remain patient amid so much doubt and annoyance. His unwillingness to urge any point upon which a mother he idolized seemed disinclined to enter, had hitherto kept him silent; but now silence seemed false delicacy, and he owed to himself to investigate the mystery which oppressed his once easy and happy home. He felt, too, that he was acting unjustly by Ethel: he had allowed a fortnight to elapse—he startled when he numbered up the days; it is strange how we allow them to glide imperceptibly away. He resolved no longer to delay the avowal of his engagement. Had his mother permitted it, she would have received his first confidence; as it was, to acknowledge his attachment became a duty to her who was now his first and dearest object.

With these thoughts passing in his mind, it may be supposed how much the cook's feelings would have been hurt, could she have known how the collared eels and raised pies, on which she had expended her utmost skill, were neglected.

Constance was the happiest one of the party: accustomed to have her observations disregarded, her faculty of observation was but little cultivated; equally accustomed to silence, it was more natural in her eyes that people should not talk than that they should. It was enough for her to sit by her cousin's side, to breathe the air that he breathed, to catch his least look and lightest word. At even a little usual civility of the table from him she blushed; and if her eyes met his for a moment, they filled with light, which none who saw them at another time, spiritless and drooping, would have believed their faint azure could possess.

It was a beautiful feeling that, which warmed the pale cheek of the youthful Constance. It

was love in its gentlest, tenderest, and least earthly essence. It was hopeless; for, in her humility, she had never dreamed of return; it was unalloyed by any meaner motive of vanity or of interest, and surrendered its whole existence in a spirit of the purest and meekest devotion. The young and loving heart needed some object of which it might dream, in its many lonely hours, and on which it might lavish its great wealth of fresh and deep affection.

There is nothing to which you so soon become accustomed as to the presence of the beloved one; the gentle chain of habit easily becomes a sweet necessity. Constance had now lived a fortnight in the same house with her cousin, and it already seemed the most natural thing in the world to see him every day. This morning, however, her enjoyment was doomed to be curtailed; for she had scarcely finished her breakfast, before her father gently reminded her of a promise she had given to sort some letters for him.

"I shall make you quite my little secretary in time," said he, with one of his own peculiarly sweet smiles.

To Constance's affectionate temper, her father's kind look or word was more than enough to recompense any sacrifice, and she left even her cousin's side with almost gladness. Norbourne's whole attention was riveted on his mother. She all but started from her seat when Lord Norbourne told his daughter to go; and, as Constance left the room, she rose with an intention of following, and then sat down, pale and trembling, as if she equally dreaded to stay or go.

"You are ill, my dearest mother!" exclaimed Norbourne, springing to her side.

Lord Norbourne rose also; and his movement seemed to recall Mrs. Courtenaye to herself. She rose calmly; and, saying to her son,—"I shall expect you in half an hour; I wish to have some conversation with you;" she, also, quitted the apartment.

Courtenaye thought the intermediate space a good opportunity of telling his uncle that his affections were irrevocably engaged. He had surmised, once or twice lately, that Lord Norbourne was not so careless of Constance as he seemed to be, and that the report of their marriage was not without his sanction. However painful the subject might be, the sooner any such idea was put an end to the better, for the sake of all parties.

"My mother has of late," said he, "been as inaccessible as a minister of state, and I want to talk to her about my marriage."

"You are thinking, then, of the holy and blessed state, as it is called, of matrimony?—I guessed as much," replied his uncle. "I have observed lately that you do not hear above half that is said to you; and the next thing that a young man loses, after his heart, is his hearing."

"There have been cases, I believe," returned Courtenaye, with a forced smile, "when a man has wished that the last mentioned loss would continue."

"By the saffron robe of Hymen," cried Lord Norbourne, "but that would be a blessing! I own that I am no great friend to marriage in general; in nine cases out of ten, the opinion of the French poet, Marivaux, is mine also:—

'I would advise a man to pause
Before he takes a wife:
Indeed, I own, I see no cause
He should not pause for life.

If a young man has his way to make in the world, a wife is a dead weight upon his hands. Indeed, I have looked upon the fable of Sisyphus as an allegory, and that his wife was the stone which so perpetually rolled back upon his hands, effectually retarding his weary progress up hill.

Norbourne smiled, and remained silent, for nothing repels confidence so much as raillery: how can you be confiding when your hearer is only witty? Lord Norbourne, however, continued speaking, and now more seriously.

"Situated as you are, my dear Courtenaye, the case is quite different; an heir is indispensable to an illustrious family, and your name entails upon you the necessity of a worthy alliance."

"My choice," interrupted Norbourne, "would do credit to any house."

"It is not for me to contradict you," said his uncle, with a politest bow than the occasion seemed to require.

"I am so glad of your approbation," exclaimed Courtenaye.

"You need never have doubted it," was the courteous reply; "Constance —"

"Constance!" ejaculated Norbourne, "I—"

"Ah! I see," interrupted Lord Norbourne, "that you think me even more ambitious than I am. I know that my heiress might look to the highest honours of the peerage, but I prefer yourself to the first duke in the land."

"But, my dear uncle," interrupted Norbourne,—

"No modesty, and no raptures," cried Lord Norbourne, as he turned to the door; "the pastoral and the heroic age are alike past away with me. Besides, your mother expects you; and I do not think that a lady ought to be kept waiting, unless it be at an assignation, and then it is a useful moral lesson."

The door closed after him, and his nephew felt that he had been completely outgeneraled. He now saw, what he had only suspected before, that his uncle wished him to marry Constance.

"Why put such nonsense into her head?" But, even while he spoke, he reproached himself: his very love for Ethel made him sensible how dreadful was the existence to which love came not.

"But," continued he, "she is young, gentle,—nay, sometimes almost pretty; she may yet find an unoccupied heart."

To this he might have added, that she was one of the first heiresses in England; but Norbourne was too young, and too enthusiastic, to balance interest and affection for one moment in the scales together. I believe all the good

that is sometimes said of human nature when I remember the feelings of youth; and it is this principle explains why men whose "hearts are dry as summer's dust," often delight in the society of the very young. The sympathy is awakened by memory.

Wallenstein exclaims of Max Piccolomini:

"For, O! he stood beside me like my youth."

The stern and worldly general saw in the young and ardent all that he had himself once been—generous, confiding, impatient of evil, confident of good, devoted and affectionate: all these must have passed away from one whose career had been in courts and camps, where he had learned the falsehood of the one, and the indifference of the other. He saw himself in his youthful officer: such was he no longer; still it was pleasant to think that he had had in him so much of good.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE CONFESSION.

Life has dark secrets; and the hearts are few
That treasure not some sorrow from the world—
A sorrow silent, gloomy, and unknown,
Yet colouring the future from the past.
We see the eye subdued, the practised smile,
The word well weigh'd before it pass the lip,
And know not of the misery within:
Yet there it works incessantly, and fears
The time to come; for time is terrible,
Avenging, and betraying.

NORBOURNE paused, with an irresolution for which he himself could not account, as he approached the door of his mother's room.

The future has a more subtle sympathy with the present than our imperfect nature can analyze. Who has not felt that nameless shadow upon the spirit, which indicates the coming trouble as surely as the overhanging cloud foretells the thunderstorm? The external world is full of signs; and so is the internal, if we knew but how to trace them. There is the weight on the air before the tempest; there is the weight on the heart as the coming evil approaches.

Scorning himself for his folly, Courtenaye made an effort and opened the door; but, almost unconsciously to himself, he did it slowly and softly. He entered unperceived, and saw his mother prostrate before the cross; her face was buried in her hands, and the whole attitude bespoke humiliation and despair. It was as if she had dashed herself upon the floor in the last agony of an overburdened spirit, which seeks solace in prayer, and finds it not. Norbourne sprang to her side, and, raising her in his arms, exclaimed,—

"For God's sake, my beloved mother, let this mystery cease! Whatever be your sorrow, let your child share it. Can I do nothing for you?"

For the first time in her life, Mrs. Courtenaye let her head sink on her son's shoulder, and burst into a passionate flood of tears. *Strange, for a woman and a widow, it was the first time that he had seen her shed such*

What must be the force of that grief which thus utterly subdued one so proud, and so self-controlled! Norbourne carried rather than led her to a seat; and, lavishing upon her every tender and soothing epithet, implored her to tell him the worst. He was struck to see how she mastered herself. The sobs were swallowed down, the tears dashed aside; and, with one kindly pressure of the hand, she went to the inner room, saying, in a low but unbroken voice,—“In five minutes, my child.”

Norbourne was left alone, and, insensibly, his eye was caught by the gloomy appearance of the room. The black hangings yet remained that had been put up at his father's death, but they were faded and somewhat torn. There was no carpet on the black oak floor, through whose crevices the wind came with that dreary sound which seems peculiar to it when it enters the dwelling of man. The wind, amid the green leaves and the breathing flowers, goes its way in music; it is the sweet and mystic song of universal nature. But it enters into our dwellings, and it learns there the accent of pain; it breathes what it bears away—the sigh that tells, even in the midnight hours, of unrest, and the voice of lamentation that speaks but in solitude. These echoes accumulate, and the house that has stood for years retains within its walls complaints long since lost in air: but the wind, that heard, recalls them; and there is a strange likeness to humanity in its murmurs, as it howls mournfully along the vaulted ceiling, or shrieks through the winding passages.

Its dreary influence was on Norbourne, though he knew it not, and added to the disconsolate effect of the chamber. He knew that it was his mother's sitting-room, and yet there was not a single object that indicated feminine taste or presence. Chair and table alike were of deal; and, from the damp appearance of the grate, where the fire scarcely struggled into warmth, he surmised, and truly, that a fire was rarely lighted there. The only picture was the martyrdom of St. Sebastian; and Norbourne shuddered at the terrible truth, which gave so vivid a representation of torture. The crucifix, on which the Saviour was extended in his last agony, occupied a recess; and, beyond these, not an object caught his attention: all around depicted suffering and gloom.

But Norbourne had little time to dwell on the life of ascetic penance to which, it was obvious, his mother had condemned herself; for she came from the inner apartment. Stern must have been the mental discipline that had so banished all trace of emotion. Her clear olive cheek was pale, and the lip colourless; but so had they been for years. Perhaps the large black eyes had a brightness that had since left their thoughtful depths, but the scarcely checked tears glistened on the eyelids. Her tall figure was drawn up to its utmost; and the long black flowing garments and veil might have suited the abbess of some strict and proud order, who had renounced the

world—its hopes, its feelings, and its vanities. But a nearer glance would have belied the first surmise. The lip was white, but it was tremulous; and human emotion was in the passionate paleness, and in the dark and glistening eyes. Mrs. Courtenaye took her seat; and, after a moment's silence, said—but the voice was hollow and constrained through all its effort at calmness,—

"I wished, my dear Norbourne, to express my entire approval of your marriage with your cousin—"

"My marriage with my cousin," interrupted Norbourne, will never take place. My uncle is so accustomed to arrange everybody's affairs for them, that he forgets that I am the first person to be consulted in an affair like this. I admire and like my uncle, but will not be dictated to. Once for all, my dear mother, I will not marry Constance Courtenaye."

"Think," exclaimed his mother, eagerly, "on the advantages of the alliance. You know very well that your estate, fine as it is, is burdened by heavy mortgages, which Constance's noble fortune would at once redeem."

"And, by the sacrifice of all my best feelings and dearest hopes, I might," cried Norbourne, "command a few luxuries to which I am perfectly indifferent."

"You are wrong," replied Mrs. Courtenaye: "luxury is but a trifle—not so power and position. With an unencumbered estate, you take the first place in the county; you obtain the finest field for the exertion of your talents: and England has no distinction to which you may not reasonably aspire."

"But I am not ambitious," returned Norbourne.

"It is what every man ought to be," interrupted his mother. "I should, from my inmost soul, despise any one who, with your advantages, could voluntarily sit down to a country life of indolent seclusion."

"I have no such idea," replied her son; "but my future does not depend on my marrying my cousin."

"It does, it does!" interrupted Mrs. Courtenaye.

"You overvalue the advantages of the alliance," said Norbourne; "but, even were they tenfold, it would be of no avail to urge them upon me. My heart, my faith, are pledged to another."

"Do not tell me so!" almost shrieked his listener. "Norbourne, I charge you, by your mother's blessing, to marry your cousin—I command, I entreat you!"

Norbourne stood startled into silence by her sudden vehemence: it was but for a moment; and he continued, calmly, but kindly,—

"My mother's command would be sacred in any matter less intimately connected with my happiness and my honour."

"They cannot," said Mrs. Courtenaye, with such utter sadness of tone that Norbourne started at the sound, "be dearer to yourself than they are to me. Do not for some foolish fancy—"

"Nay," interrupted Courtenaye, "I would not present to you a daughter unworthy of yourself. The fortune, the family, of Miss Churchill are equal to my own; and as to herself—"

"Do not talk of her!" exclaimed his mother. "I implore you, think of the claims that your cousin has on your forbearance—your pity: she loves you."

Norbourne coloured, and then said, gravely,—"I do not wish to hear this, even from you. My cousin's feelings are too delicate for even our confidence."

"You are content, then, to repay the affection you have yourself inspired with the coldest ingratitude?" asked Mrs. Courtenaye.

"My dearest mother," cried the youth, "your desire for my advantageous settlement makes you unjust. You know well that nothing in my conduct has ever authorized Constance to fancy that I looked upon her but as a relative."

"And can you bear to think," replied Mrs. Courtenaye, "on the misery you have inflicted on that young and innocent heart? She loves you simply, earnestly, unconsciously; her whole life is bound up in yours: she will die, Courtenaye—die of a broken heart."

"You press me too hardly," exclaimed her son; "there is one as young—and O, how fair!—who has intrusted her destiny to my keeping. I have sought in vain the opportunity of telling you—of imploring your consent: I do now. I cannot marry my cousin, for I love another."

"O, Norbourne! O, my own beloved child!" exclaimed Mrs. Courtenaye, wringing her hands with a passionate gesture of entreaty,—“have you no love for me? This affection is of but a few months' growth: will you weigh it against that which has cherished you for years? My son, have pity upon your mother! I will never consent to your marrying any but your cousin—for my sake consent."

"My dearest mother," cried Norbourne, "is it possible that worldly advantages can so far blind your judgment? Do you know what it is to love—to feel how unutterably dear the presence of another can be—to know that all life could offer were valueless without her—to hope, to fear, to think, only for her beloved sake?"

"Hush, hush!" said his mother; "this is a boy's vain passion: will you weigh it against your mother's love? Norbourne, few mothers have ever loved a child as I have loved you. You have been my all—my world: night after night I have watched your sleep; your little head was never cradled near any heart but my own—ay, and more, for your sake I have sinned against myself. I know the falsehood of the faith in which you have been brought up, yet never have I sought to divert you from it: it led to power and honour in your native land. On my head, I said, let the sin rest. These walls could tell how the penance of midnight has expiated my fault."

Choose, Norbourn, between your mistress and your mother—between my blessing and my curse.”

Norbourn was less affected by this passionate appeal than might be supposed. He was the most struck by what appeared his mother's extreme unreasonableness. She had not brought forward one rational objection, nor one argument beyond his interest. It appeared to him that she had allowed her imagination to gain an undue sway from the solitude in which she had lived. The idea of a marriage between himself and his cousin had been dwelt upon till it reigned paramount, and she could not even comprehend that there was another side to the question.

Impressed with this belief, he rose; and said to his mother, in a kind, but determined tone, “I will not now prolong an interview which so agitates you. Think over the subject, my dearest mother; and, after I have spoken to my uncle, I will return.”

“Speak to your uncle! Stop!” exclaimed Mrs. Courtenaye, grasping his arm with a convulsive force, of which her thin white fingers did not seem capable; while her fine features were convulsed by some strong, though still suppressed emotion: “rash boy, you rush upon your fate! You shall not—must not leave this room to meet your uncle, unless it be to tell him that you marry his daughter.”

“Mother,” said Norbourn, startled by her manner, “I will not, indeed, leave the room till you tell me the meaning of all this. My uncle has no right to influence my actions: I am independent of him.”

“No, no, you are not independent of him; every thing you have,” interrupted Mrs. Courtenaye, “hangs upon his will. Come hither to the window, boy,” and she drew him after her with the unnatural strength of a moment's excitement: “look there!”

Norbourn mechanically gazed from the casement; and nature, so strong in her loveliness, for an instant caught his attention. The golden light that bathed the richly-coloured woods, and warmed the purple distance of the hills, was in strong contrast to the cold and gloomy chamber in which he stood: but such tranquil beauty has no influence on an hour of strong emotion; and he turned away, to question of his mother's face.

“Look from the window,” said she, in a hoarse whisper; “do you see the turrets of our old house fling their shadows on the grass below? Do you see the fields and woods around? They now call you master. I tell you, that one word of your uncle's, and they are gone from you forever. If you do not marry his daughter, he speaks that word.”

Norbourn heard her words: he made no answer, for at first he doubted that he had heard aright. Then a terrible fear of his mother's sanity crossed his mind; but there was that in her face which allowed no question of her intellect.

“I know not,” at last he exclaimed, “what strange mystery thus gives my birthright over

to another; but this I know, though it be in his power to alienate from me every rood of that which is my rightful inheritance, I will not wed his daughter. Two things are yet left me—my honour and my name.”

Mrs. Courtenaye's hand yet rested on that of her son; he felt the cold shudder which passed through her, and he saw the drops stand on her high white brow.

“Not even that!” said she; and he started at the faint hollowness of her voice. “Refuse to wed Constance, and you are with neither house, nor land, nor name!”

“What do you mean, madam?” exclaimed he, in a tone as strange and altered as her own; “am I not the son of the late Mr. Courtenaye—am I not your son?”

Both stood silent, each with a fixed and fascinated gaze on the other: she, with a face worn with a sorrow borne for many years—wan, emaciated, and on whose still fine features suffering wrought like physical pain; he, with all the hope and bloom of youth smitten by a sudden blow—pale as death, and yet with lip and brow curved as if they defied the very agony that wrung the blood from the heart.

“Am I,” asked the youth, slowly, but with a voice so changed that it came unfamiliar to the ear even of his mother,—“am I the son of Mr. Courtenaye?”

“You are,” replied his mother—and she leaned against the wall for support; while the blood, that had curdled at her heart for years, rushed over her face, throat, and hands, for a moment, and then left her even more deadly pale than before,—“but I was not his wife.”

CHAPTER XV.

THE CONSENT.

It is the past that maketh my despair;
The dark, the sad, the irrevocable past.
Alas! why should our lot in life be made,
Before we know that life? Experience comes,
But comes too late. If I could now recall
All that I now regret, how different
Would be my choice! at best a choice of ill;
But better than my miserable past.
Loathed, yet despised, why must I think of it!

THE bitterness of death was upon the unfortunate young man: he stood gazing from the window, but seeing nothing. He felt stunned—mortification sorrow, and anger, mingled together: the past was like a dream, and the future swam indistinctly before him. The first object that roused him was the sight of his mother, who still leaned against the wall for support, her stately figure bowed in an attitude of hopeless misery; and her pale hands hung down as if she had not the power to raise them even to dash away the few tears the one or two drops, that overflowed her fixed and dilated eyes. Norbourn saw how worn and wan they were: he caught them in his; and, pressing them to his lips, exclaimed,—

“My poor mother! I ask not of the past; I know you have suffered—that you suffer far more than I do. To me you have ever been

the kindest, the best, the dearest. Let my uncle do his worst, we will leave this together."

"You will marry Constance," exclaimed she, "and save us both from the misery of disclosure?"

Norbourne's brow darkened.

"It were dishonour in me to yield. I will not play the part of an impostor, whom my uncle must despise even while he screens. No; these estates are his right: let him take them; I will not buy them with his daughter's hand."

"Not for your own sake, but for mine," said Mrs. Courtenaye, "do I implore you to consent. My life and death are in your hands; for never would I survive the disgrace of a discovery."

"It is somewhat late to think of this," exclaimed Norbourne, bitterly. The word was repented as spoken: "My dearest mother, you urge me too far."

"Norbourne," said she earnestly, almost calmly, "listen to my story; and you will then find it is not even the harshest justice that you measure upon my ill-fated head."

She returned to her seat by the fire, and, pointing to a chair near, made one strong effort at self-control, and began as follows:

"I was but sixteen when I met your father; yet even then I had known sorrow. My parents had both died within my recollection, and left me to guardians, who, only intent on securing my fortune, used every means to induce me to follow a religious life. They forced me into a convent, whence your father rescued me; and that evening I was married to him—ay, married. A daughter of my noble house could not have stooped to a love unsanctified by duty. We were married according to the rites of my own faith,—a faith I still hold as sacred as it was once held in this recreant land.

"We had many dangers and difficulties to encounter; and it was months before we reached England in safety. Alas! you were born before that time; and, as I learned too late, our differing faiths made our marriage illegal. He was only my husband before his God and his honour. He should have thought of them before he disgraced the woman who never wronged him by a doubt, and the child whose very existence was his own. I learned the truth, but would never consent to a second marriage. It could not do you justice; and, for myself, I needed none. I stood acquitted by my own conscience. I had not transgressed the laws of God; and the laws of men, what were they?—founded on the party and the policy of the moment. None knew the secret but Mr. Courtenaye's brother, and till now he has held it inviolable. But I know Lord Norbourne well; he would sacrifice his life for the success of a favourite project. Tell me that you will marry Constance: save me from shame—from death!"

Norbourne stood silent and irresolute. Ethel and his mother rose confusely together; but Mrs. Courtenaye could not bear the suspense.

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She sprang from her seat—she threw herself at her son's feet, and, resisting all his attempts to raise her, exclaimed, while she clasped his knees with passionate vehemence, "Never, never will I rise till you promise to save me from all I most loathe and fear! Must I be made a by-word and a scorn? 'The days of my youth and beauty to be remembered only to tell how fair I was as Courtenaye's mistress! To become the subject of the pity I have so despised! Norbourne, you are your father's representative; you owe me some atonement: at your hands I ask the name and fame which your father risked in his selfish passion. 'The God whose shrine I deserted for earthly affection is terribly avenged. My husband deceived—my son deserts me; but you cannot, Norbourne, abandon to shame the mother who watched your cradle. It is my life I ask—I will not survive the disgrace!'"

"Mother," said Norbourne, in a hoarse whisper, "tell Lord Norbourne from me, I will marry his daughter."

CHAPTER XVI.

A LONDON LIFE.

The poet's lovely faith creates
The beauty he believes;
The light which on his footsteps waits,
He from himself receives.

His lot may be a weary lot;
His thrall a heavy thrall;
And cares and griefs the crowd know not,
His heart may know them all:

But still he hath a mighty dower
The loveliness that throws
Over the common thought and hour
The beauty of the rose.

EXISTENCE is full of strange contrasts. The wheel of life whirls round, and leaves us scarcely time to know where we are before we find ourselves in a totally different position. The material is always much the same,—pride, vanity, deceit, and selfishness; but it is worked up into very different shapes.

A few weeks ago, Walter Maynard was pensively dreaming away existence to the music of a woodland brook, or in the soft shadows of the falling leaves. He was enjoying the most delicious hour of a poet's life—that consciousness of power which indicates its possession; but a consciousness unimbittered by the harsh realities of its after-struggles into actual life. In this one charmed hour is all that afterwards constitutes poetry: at once poetry and its prophecy, it is the Aurora of the mind,

"Fille de la jour,
Qui naquit avant son père."

But he had left the green wood, and the thousand inspirations of the wild flowers, and the shadows that flit athwart the drooping boughs, for scenes whose inspirations were thought, toil, and suffering. The clock of St. Mary had just tolled one, and the neighbour hood around was hushed in profound repose.

Every window was darkened excepting one; and there a faint light burned steadily. Night after night it burned till it mingled with the chill white light of morning.

There has always been to me something inexpressibly touching in the single taper burning through the long and lonely hours of silence and sleep. It must mark some weary vigil; one, perhaps, by the sick couch, where rests the pale face on which we dread every moment to look our last. How the very heart suspends its beating in the hushed stillness of the sick chamber! what a history of hopes, fears, and cares, are in its hours! How does love then feel its utter fondness and its helplessness! How is the more active business of the outward world forgotten in the deep interest of the hushed world in those darkened walls!—a look, a tone, a breath, is there of vital importance. With what tender care the cup is raised to the feverish lip; with what intense anxiety the colour is watched on the wasted cheek! How are the pulses counted on the thin hand, and sometimes in vain!

Again, that lonely taper, how often is it the companion and sign of studies for which the day is too short—studies that steal the gloss from the sunny hair, and the light from the overtaxed eye!

Walter Maynard is bending over a little table, while the rapid pen is slow in putting down the thoughts that crowd upon him. His cheek is flushed with eagerness, and the red lip is curved with triumph. It does not suit the scene around; but from that the mind of the young poet is far, far away. There was that desolate air about the chamber which is peculiar to an ill-furnished London room: cities need luxuries, were it only to conceal the actual. In the country, an open window lets in at once the fair face of heaven: the sunshine has its own cheerfulness; the green bough flings on the floor its pleasant shade; and the spirit sees, at a glance, the field and the hedge where the hawthorn is in bloom. Not so in a town: there smoke enters at the casement; and we look out upon the darkened wall, and the narrow street, where the very atmosphere is dull and coarse. Its gloomy influence is on all.

The room where Walter was seated writing was one that any, who had looked inside for a moment, must have known could only have belonged to a town. The floor was blackened, as were the unpapered walls. The curtains, thin and scanty, had long merged their original red into a dusky brown. Ornaments there were none, for the crooked mirror could scarcely be such: you started back at your own face, so grim was the shadow thrown over it, so rough was the complexion reflected. The dust had lain on its surface so long that it had become part even of the glass. A fire burned in the grate; but it rather indicated its presence by smoke, which stole forth in occasional puffs, than by its warmth.

The air which the young student breathed was bitter with the vapour that had gradually gathered around him. His hands, small and

delicate as a woman's, had long since assumed that dead white which marks extreme cold. Still he wrote on. He was too much engrossed in his own charmed employ not to be insensible for a time to all external influences: he might suffer afterwards, but now his mind was his kingdom. Ever and anon the cheek wore a deeper crimson, and the dark eyes filled with sudden fire, as he felt the idea clothe itself in words tangible to the many, as its bodiless presence had previously been to himself. Solitary, chilled, and weary, yet the young poet hung over his page, on which was life, energy, and beauty; and under such, or similar circumstances, have been written those pages to which the world owes so much. A history of how and where works of imagination have been produced, would be more extraordinary than even the works themselves. Walter Maynard is but a type of his class.

The life of the most successful writer has rarely been other than of toil and privation; and here I cannot but notice a singularly absurd "popular fancy," that genius and industry are incompatible. The one is inherent in the other. A mind so constituted has a restlessness in its powers, which forces them into activity. Take our most eminent writers, and how much actual labor must have been bestowed on their glorious offerings at the altar of their country, and their fame! What a godlike thing that fame is! Think what it is to be the solace of a thousand lonely hours—to cheer the weary moments of sickness, to fling a charm around even nature. How many are there to whom, in long after years, your name will come like a note of music, who will love and honour you, because you have awakened within them thoughts and feelings which stir the loftiest dreams and the sweetest pulses of their nature! The poet's life is one of want and suffering, and often of mortification—mortification, too, that comes terribly home; but far be it from me to say, that it has not its own exceeding great reward. It may be late in coming, but the claim on universal sympathy is at last allowed. The future, glorious and calm, brightens over the grave; and then, for the present, the golden world of imagination is around it. Not an emotion of your own beating heart, but it is recorded in music.

Walter Maynard felt neither his poverty nor his seclusion. He was living in the old heroic time; the brave and the beautiful were at his side, while he gave them high words, fitting their high converse. On the heroine of his play he dwelt with the passionate fondness of a lover: there the real mingled with the ideal: could he write of love, and not think of Ethel Churchill? She was the Egeria of his heart, who taught him all the truth of tenderness. If there be poetry in this world, it is in the depths of an unrequited and an imaginative passion—pure, dreaming, sacred from all meaner cares and lower wishes; asking no return, but feeling that life were little to lavish on the beloved one. Often and often did Walter's dark eyes glisten as he poured his

hole soul in some strain of tender eloquence, which he knew must touch the heart of woman. "She will read it;" that little phrase—that hope, what happiness, has it not given!

Walter had been spared some of the difficulties attendant on a young writer's first efforts in London, by the kindness of Sir Jasper Meredith, whose letter of introduction to his bookseller had been more efficacious than such things usually are. The fact was, he had written another, repeating his commendations, and saying that he would be responsible for any expenses incurred in bringing any early productions before the public. Of this fact Walter was in complete ignorance, and himself was astonished at his own good fortune, having his pamphlet and poems so readily received. In the mean time, he shut himself in obscure lodgings, and pursued his labours with the industry that hope gives to a pursuit.

CHAPTER XVII.

ANOTHER LONDON LIFE.

A pretty, rainbow sort of life enough;
Fill'd up with vanities and gay caprice;
Such life is like the garden at Versailles,
Where all is artificial; and the stream
Is held in marble basins, or sent up
Amid the fretted air, in waterfalls;
Fantastic, sparkling; and the element,
The mighty element, a moment's toy;
And, like all toys, ephemeral.

Pleasure lasts forever, but enjoyment does not: the reason is, that the one lies around, and perpetually renews itself; but the other is within, and exhausts itself. Lady Marchmont was at the pleasantest stage of both. At rest, all things are new, and most things delightful. Vanity, novelty, and excitement, at once the graces and fates of society, were all in attendance upon her. A few weeks made her a reigning toast; verses were written, and glasses broken, in her honour; and it was an undecided thing, whether the Duke of Wharton wore her chains, or those of Lady Vortley. One day would suffice to tell the history of many.

"When sleepless lovers just at twelve awake,"

he awakened also. Chocolate came in those airy cups of India china, which made the delight of our grandmothers, and whose value was such, that the poet satirist considered their loss to be the severest trial to a woman's selings—*alias* her temper; while to be

"Mistress of herself, though China fall,"

was held an achievement almost too great for feminine philosophy. Chocolate then enabled her languid beauty to go through the duties of her toilette. Notes were read, laces looked over, the last new verses looked over with them; perhaps a page read from the last French romance—the mind a little disturbed from its heroic sorrows by the consideration, whether the next set of new bodkins should be of silver or pearl. Then it was to be de-

cided what ribands would suit the complexion; whether the gazer would have to exclaim,

"In her the beauties of the spring are seen,
Her cheek is rosy, and her gown is green;"

or whether he would have to soar a yet higher flight, and cry,—

"In her the glory of the heaven we view,
Her eyes are starlike, and her mantle blue."

Then the patches had to be placed—patches full of sentiment, coquetry, and bits of opinions as minute as themselves. Essences and powder had to be scattered together, and Henrietta's long black tresses gathered into a mass which might fairly set all the orders of architecture at defiance. Lastly came the hoop, and, with scarf and fan,

"Conscious beauty put on all her charms."

Friends began to drop in. One came with intelligence of a sale, where the most divine things in the world were to be had for nothing, or next to it—that *next to it*, by-the-by, is usually a very sufficient difference. Another came fresh from an Indian house, where silks and smiles, fans and flirtations, Chinese monsters and lovers, made the most delightful confusion possible. Ah, those Indian warehouses made the morning pass in a charming manner! many a soft confession was whispered over a huge china jar; many a heart has succumbed to a suite of mother-of-pearl card-box and counters; and as to the shawls, why, the whole feminine world has long ago acknowledged them to be irresistible. To one or other of these Lady Marchmont was usually hurried away; occupied with bargains,

"Bought, because they may be wanted—
Wanted, because they may be had."

Then came the walk on the Mall, with as many cavaliers in her wake as there are bubbles in the track of the stately swan; each with sigh and compliment equally ready-made. Heavens, but the classic deities did see service in those days! Juno, Venus, and the Graces, do, certainly, round off a sentence; and the very commonplace is redeemed by a fine world of olden poetry, that nothing can quite destroy.

There is an exquisite vein of flattery running through our ancient masters of song: when they wished to paint their mistress's charms, all nature was compelled into the sweet services. How fine is Dryden's,

"In the far land of pleasant Thessalia,
Uprose the sun, and uprose Emily!"

How sweet Donne's parting prayer to her who would fain have companioned him, a gentle page,—

"When I'm away, dream me some happiness;"

or the sea captain's petition to his unknown mistress,—

"Tell me thy name, fair saint,
That I may call upon it in a storm,
And save some ship from perishing;"

or, to conclude with Carew's picturesque belief,

"Ask me no more where June bestows,
When spring is gone, the fading rose;
For in her beauty's orient deep
Those flowers, as in their causes sleep."

These days of romantic gallantry had somewhat waned: but enough of the high-toned and classic remained to make the charming things then said very charming indeed; and never were they poured in a fairer ear than in Lady Marchmont's; nor, it must be confessed, in one more ready to receive them.

Night came, with that increase of gayety which has always been night's peculiar privilege—perhaps on the principle of contrast. Monday, it was the *ridotto*; Tuesday, the opera; Wednesday, Ranelagh; Thursday, the play; Friday, a ball; Saturday, a rout, or else a little of all these blended together. What a sensation was produced the first night of her appearance in the stage box! One line in the play was,

"I look upon her face, and think of heaven;"

and how many white gloves at once addressed the line and their applause together to herself. No wonder that Lady Marchmont began to wonder whether Paradise and London were not synonymous terms.

One morning, while

"Watching the dumb devotion of her glass,"

in came Lady Mary Wortley Montague, who caught both her hands, and cried, laughing,—
"Yield yourself my prisoner—rescue or no rescue!"

"Why," replied Henrietta, "the fashion of wearing your ladyship's chains is too universal for me to resist it."

"There is a good child! and now come and do as I bid you. We have improvised the most charming party imaginable. 'The summer has come back by surprise. I own I wonder that June was not tired of us: still here is a day so sunny, that October does not know its own. The Duke of Wharton, Lord Hervey, and some two or three others, have designed a water party in our honour. We are to go and see Pope's new grotto, opened for the first time: then try Hampton Court, and see if Mrs. Howard will stake a little princely gold on a pool of basset."

Lady Marchmont was delighted; and a little time saw them

"Sailing the bosom of the silver Thames."

There were several besides, but a *partie quarrée* was formed at their end of the boat, by herself, Lady Mary, the duke, and Lord Hervey. The ladies were on their best looks, the gentlemen on their best manners; and manner in the one sex is equivalent to look in the other. The two fair dames were sufficiently jealous of the glory of conquest; and the two cavaliers sufficiently undecided, to give a due degree of piquancy to exertion; and it must be allowed that each was worth the trouble of pleasing.

Lady Mary was in the zenith of her beauty; and, as it was a beauty that had always rested on feature and expression, the first bloom was *scarcely missed*. She caught the attention at

once, but she was more likely to attract than to fix. The bright dark eyes were restless, and the lip had smiles more sarcastic than sweet; and there was a pretty defiance in her air, which piqued rather than interested. Her dress was picturesque, but careless, and would not have suited any one but herself; and her manners were in exact keeping with her face and costume;—they were at once indifferent and flattering: she exacted much attention, but she also bestowed much; and there was a brilliant uncertainty in her conversation, which gave it a peculiar charm. None could tell whether the next sentence was to be a compliment or an epigram. She talked much, and enjoyed talking; and, obviously, did not dislike a little *tracasserie*. Scandal, with her, did not lose any of its usual snowball propensities, of gathering as it went.

Next her sat the Duke of Wharton, in an attitude ingeniously indolent. He had that air, so English, and yet so impossible to define—high-bred. To-day his toilette was simple to affectation: he had resolved, he said, not to have a care in the world, and he began by dismissing the most important. His figure was good, but slight; and with singular grace in all its movements. His finely cut features were capable of every variety of expression; they were, to use a French epithet, expressive as their epithets for all social qualities usually are, *mobile* in the extreme. They needed the passing animation of the moment; for, when in a state of repose, there was something wanting. The face did not interest; you noted in it a certain contraction of forehead, and an indecision about the mouth, which indicated, surely enough, Wharton's character. It was like a fairy tale, in which the good fairies assemble round the infant's cradle, and lavish upon it all the choicest gifts. Suddenly, some old and malicious magician appears, and destroys the effect of all these fine qualities by some one evil addition.

The curse to Philip Wharton was the same that Jacob pronounced over Reuben on his death-bed: "Unstable as water, thou shalt not excel." To-day he was

"Captive in Cytherea's bower,
To Beauty and her train;"

to-morrow engaged in some dark intrigue, whose intricacy was its chief charm: and still, whether as lover or politician, diverted from his first aim by some other object.

"Thus, on the sands of Afric's burning plains,
Though deeply made, no long impress remains.
The slightest leaf can leave its figure there,
The strongest form is scattered by the air."

What the Duke of Wharton wanted was passion—passion, which alone gives intensity to the purpose, and constancy to the pursuit. He knew no feeling stronger than excitement, and looked for nothing beyond amusement. His friends could not rely upon him, but his foes could; they might be sure that his resentment would, like all his undertakings, only go half way.

On the other side was Lord Hervey, a

light, fair, young man, dressed—O, ye gods, —invention enough for an epic must have gone to complete that toilette! It involved the peace of mind of “a whole sex of queens;” it was too destructive, and such Lord Hervey felt himself to be: his voice to a woman took a tone of tender pity, as if he compassionated his conquests. He never talked about any thing but himself; because he was persuaded that, in so doing, he chose the most attractive subject to his listeners. His horse, his dog, his every thing that was his, had a peculiar charm, from the mere fact of belonging to him. He was clever, and yet did the most absurd things, only because he believed that his doing them redeemed the absurdity.

It was a lovely day; for, say what they will, England does see the sunshine sometimes. Indeed, I think that our climate is an injured angel: has it not the charm of change, and what charm can be greater? That morning the change was a deep blue sky, with a few large clouds floating over it; a sun which turned the distant horizon into a golden haze; and a soft west wind, that seemed only sent to bring the sound of the French horns in the boat that followed their own. As they passed along Chelsea Reach, the bells of the church were ringing merrily.

“Why, that is a wedding peal!” cried the Duke of Wharton; “and it puts me in mind that Miss Pelham and Sir John Shelley are just going to enter into the holy and blessed state.”

“Yes,” replied Lady Mary, “and I never knew a marriage with a greater prospect of happiness—she will be a widow in six weeks!”

“Well,” said Lady Marchmont, “you carry your connubial theory even further than in your last ballad:—

“My power is pass’d by like a dream,
And I have discover’d too late,
That whatever a lover may seem,
A husband is what we must hate.”

Lady Mary smiled very graciously; she almost forgave Henrietta for looking so well: to have one’s own verses learned by heart, and gracefully quoted, is more than poetical nature can resist.

“For my part,” continued the Duke of Wharton, “I hold that the connubial system of this country is a complete mistake. The only happy marriages I ever heard of are those in some Eastern story I once read, where the king marries a new wife every night, and cuts off her head in the morning.”

“It would suit your grace, at all events,” replied Lady Mary; “you who are famed for being to one thing constant never.”

“Well,” exclaimed Lord Hervey, who had appeared to be absorbed in watching his own shadow on the water, “I do not think it is such a dreadful thing to be married. It is a protection, at all events.”

“Thou, who so many favours hast received,
Wondrous to tell, and hard to be believed!”

cried Lady Mary: “and so, like the culprits
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of old, you are forced to take refuge from your pursuers at the altar.”

“For pity’s sake,” ejaculated the duke, “do let us talk of some less disagreeable subject.”

“Fie, your grace!” exclaimed Lady Mary. “Disagreeable subject! Lord Hervey was only, as usual, talking of himself.”

The whole party were silent for some minutes. After all, wit is something like sunshine in a frost—very sharp, very bright, but very cold and uncomfortable. The silence was broken by Lady Marchmont exclaiming,—“How fine the old trees are! there is something in the deep shadow that they fling upon the water, that reminds me of home.”

“I am not sure,” answered the duke, “that I like to be reminded of anything. Let me exist intensely in the present—the past and future should be omitted from my life by express desire.”

“What an insipid existence!” replied Henrietta, “—no hopes, and no fears.”

“Ah! forgive me,” whispered Wharton, “if the present moment appear to me a world in itself.”

“I,” said Lord Hervey, “do not dislike the past, present, nor future. Like woman, they have all behaved very well to me. The past has given me a great deal of pleasure; the present is with you; and as to the future, such is the force of example, that I doubt not it will do by me as its predecessors have done.”

“Truly,” cried Lady Mary, “the last new comedy that I saw in Paris must have modelled its hero from you: let me recommend you to adopt two of its lines as your motto:—

“J’ai l’esprit parfait—du moins je le crois;
Et je rends grâce au Dieu de m’avoir créé—moi!”

“It is very flattering to be so appreciated,” answered Lord Hervey, with the most perfect nonchalance.

“What an affecting thing,” said Lady Mary, “was the death of Lord Carleton! He died as he lived, holding one hand of the fair Dutchess of Queensberry; who, with the other, was feeding him with chicken. What an example he gave to his sex! he was equally liberal with his diamonds and his affections.”

“*L’un vaut bien l’autre*,” said Lady Marchmont.

“I shall set off for Golconda to-morrow,” cried Wharton.

“Don’t!” interrupted Lady Mary; “it would be too mortifying, when you come back, to find how little we had missed you.”

“O, you would miss me,” returned he, laughing, “precisely because you ought not. I hope that you have heard the proposed alteration in the commandments at the last political meeting at Houghton? Hanbury suggested that the ‘not’ should, in future, be omitted; but Doddington objected, as people might leave off doing wrong if it became a duty. At all events, they would not steal, covet, and bear false witness against their neighbour.”

with half the relish that they do at present."

"Ah," replied Lady Mary, "we make laws, and we follow customs. By the first we cut off our own pleasures; and by the second, make ourselves answerable for the follies of others."

"Well, Lady Mary," replied Wharton, "we have now arrived where you, and you only, give the laws—yonder is our poet's residence."

The boat drew to the side, and the gay party stepped upon the bank.

CHAPTER XVIII.

POPE'S VILLA.

I may not, regret me; you will not regret;
You will try to forget me, you cannot forget;
We shall hear of each other, ah, misery to hear
Those names from another which once were so dear!

But deep words shall sting thee that breathe of the past,
And many things bring thee thoughts fated to last:
The fond hopes that centred in thee are all dead,
The iron has enter'd the soul where they fed.

Of the chain that once bound me, the memory is thine,
But my words are around thee, their power is on thine;
No hope, no repentance, my weakness is o'er,
I died with the sentence—I love thee no more!

It was a very bit of Arcadia, the scene that the lawn presented. A few late flowers lingered among the shrubs, and the rich colouring on the autumnal foliage supplied the place of bloom. The garden was laid out with exquisite taste, and the groups scattered around seemed animated with the spirit of the place; for they placed themselves in little knots, just where they were calculated to produce the best effect. There was an elegant collation ready; and, while Pope talked of

"His humble roof, and poet's fare,"

he had neglected nothing that could please his assembled guests. To Lady Marchmont he was the most interesting object of all, though all his *petits soins* were addressed to Lady Mary Wortley Montague, who received them with that encouraging coquetry born of flattered vanity.

Flattery is like champagne, it soon gets into the head; but in Pope's flattery there was too much of the heart. Long after hours of neglect and mortification dearly atoned for that morning's pleasant delusion. There is something in genius for which fate demands severe atonement. In some things Pope's was an exception to the general lot. He dwelt in that "lettered ease" to which his own taste gave refinement; his talents pined in no long obscurity, but early reached their just appreciation; his friends were those whose friendship is honour, and he lived in a very court of personal homage and flattery. But fortune only neglected to do what nature had already done. Dwarfed from his birth, that slender frame was tenanted by acute physical ills; which, acting upon a mind even more sensitive than his body, made life one long scene of irritation and suffering. The fingers were *contracted by pain that yet gave the sweetest*

music to their page: satire was at once his power (and the sense of power is sweet to us all) and his refuge.

The passion and melancholy of one or two poems just suffice to show what a world of affection and sentiment was checked and subdued, because their indulgence had been only too painful; but to-day was to be as flowing as his own verses: he was at her side on whom he lavished so much passionate and graceful flattery; and Lady Mary paid him back,—not in kind, for his heart went with his words, but hers was "only sweet lip-service."

There is a cruelty in feminine coquetry, which is one of nature's contradictions. Formed of the softest materials—of the gentle smile and the soothing word, yet nothing can exceed its utter hard-heartedness. Its element is vanity, of the coldest, harshest, and most selfish order: it sacrifices all sense of right, all kindly feelings, all pity, for the sake of a transient triumph. Lady Mary knew—for when has woman not known?—her power. She knew that she was wholly beloved by a heart, proud, sensitive, and desponding. She herself had warmed fear into hope—had made passion seem possible to one who felt, keenly felt, how much nature had set him apart. If genius for one moment believed that it could create love, as it could create all else, hers was the fault; she nursed the delusion: it was a worthy tribute to her self-love.

"Truly, her ladyship," said the Duke of Wharton, "parades Parnassus a little too much. Does she suppose nobody is to be flattered but herself? Come, Hervey, let us try a little wholesome neglect." Forthwith they devoted themselves exclusively to Lady Marchmont. Lady Mary's smiles were unmarked, and her witticisms fell dead weights so far as they were concerned. This was too much for a wit and a beauty to endure. Of what avail was flattery that she only heard herself? She grew impatient till the collation was over, and was the first to step out upon the lawn.

Pope did the honours of his garden, which was a poem in itself. He showed them his favourite willow—fittest tree for such a soil—so pale and tender in its green, so delicate a lining within the leaves, so fragile and so drooping, with so mournful a murmur when the wind stirs its slender branches. The whole scene was marked by that air of refined and tranquil beauty which is the charm of an English landscape. The fields had that glossy green, both refreshing and cheerful; the slight ascents were clothed with trees—some retaining their verdure, others wearing those warm and passionate colours that, like all things coloured by passion, so soon exhaust themselves. Yet what a gorgeous splendour is on an autumnal landscape! The horsechestnut, with its rich mixture of orange and brown—the sycamore, with its warrior scarlet—the coral red of the small leaves of the hawthorn, mixed together with an oriental pomp; as if the year died like the Assyrian monarch, on a

pyre of all precious things. Winding its way in broken silver, the sunshine dancing on every ripple, the Thames lay at the edge of the grassy sweep. The blue sky, with the light clouds floating on its surface, was mirrored in the depths of the river; but, as if it lost somewhat of its high tranquillity under the influence of our sphere, the reflection was agitated and tremulous, while the reality was calm and still. It is but the type of our restless world, and the serene one to which we aspire: we look up, and the heavens are above, holy and tranquil; we look down on their mirror below, and they are varying and troubled. But few flowers, and those pale and faint, lingered in the garden: these Pope gathered and offered to his fair guests. Lady Marchmont placed hers carefully in her girdle. "I shall keep even the withered leaves as a relic," said she, with a smile even more flattering than her words. It was well that she engrossed the attention of her host from the dialogue going on between Lord Hervey and Lady Mary.

"You learned the language of flowers in the east," said he, "but I thought dwarfs were only the messengers."

"And such they are now," replied his listener: "here is one flower for you,

'The rest the gods dispersed on empty air,'"

and she flung the blossoms carelessly from her.

Pope did not see the action, for he was pointing out a beautiful break in the view. "I have," said he, "long had a favourite project—that of planting an old Gothic cathedral in trees. Tall poplars, with their white stems, the lower branches cut away, would serve for the pillars; while different heights would form the aisles. The thick green boughs would shed 'a dim religious light,' and some stately old tree would have a fine effect as the tower."

"A charming idea!" cried Wharton; "and we all know

'That sweet saint whose name the shrine would bear.'

But, while we are waiting for the temple, can you not show us the altar?—we want to see your grotto."

Pope desired nothing better than to show his new toy, and led the way to the pretty and fanciful cave, which was but just finished. It was duly admired; but, while looking around, Wharton observed some verses lying on the seat.

"A treasure for the public good," exclaimed he; "I volunteer reading them aloud."

"Nay, nay, that is very unfair," cried Pope, who, nevertheless, did not secretly dislike the proposal.

"O," replied the duke, "we will allow for your modesty's 'sweet, reluctant, amorous delay'; but read them I must and shall." Then, turning towards Lady Mary, he read the following lines:—

"Ah, friend, 'tis true—this truth you lovers know,
In vain my structure rises, my gardens grow;

In vain fair Thames reflects the double scene
Of hanging woodlands, and of sleeping green:
Joy lives not here; to happier seats it flies,
And only lives where Wortley casts her eyes."

"Pray, 'fair inspirer of the tender strains,' let me lay the offering at your feet."

"Under them, if you please," said she, her fine features expressing the most utter contempt; and, trampling the luckless compliment in the dust, she took Lord Hervey's hand, and, exclaiming,—"'The atmosphere of this place is too oppressive for me,'" left the grotto: but part of her whisper to her companion was meant to be audible,—

"A signpost likeness of the human race,
That is at once resemblance and disgrace."

CHAPTER XIX.

Alas, how bitter are the wrongs of love
Life has no other sorrow so acute:
For love is made of every fine emotion,
Of generous impulses, and noble thoughts;
It looketh to the stars, and dreams of heaven;
It nestles 'mid the flowers, and sweetens earth.
Love is aspiring, yet is humble, too:
It doth exalt another o'er itself,
With sweet heart homage, which delights to raise
That which it worships; yet is fain to win
The idol to its lone and lowly home
Of deep affection. 'Tis an utter wreck
When such hopes perish. From that moment, life
Has in its depths a well of bitterness,
For which there is no healing.

LADY MARCHMONT was left alone in the grotto with its ill-fated master, and every kindly feeling in her nature was in arms. Affecting not to have noticed what passed, she approached where Pope stood,—speechless, pale with anger, and a yet deeper emotion: she said, in a voice whose usual sweetness was sweeter than ever, with its soothing and conciliating tone,—"'There is one part of your garden, Mr. Pope, which I must entreat you to show me. I have a dear, kind, old uncle at home, who owes you many a delightful evening. He will never forgive me unless I write him word that I have seen

'The grapes long lingering on the sunny wall.'"

Pope took her hand mechanically, and led her forth; but the effort at self-control was too much for his weak frame. The drops stood on that pale, high brow, which was the poetry of his face, and he bent against the railing. "No!" exclaimed he, passionately, after a few minutes' silence, "your courtesy, lady, cannot disguise from me that you, too, heard the insult of that heartless woman. Let me speak—I know I may trust your kindness; and, even if you turned into after ridicule the bitter outpouring of this moment's misery, you would but do as others, in whom I trusted, have done. My God! how madly I have loved her—madly, indeed, since it made me forget the gulf that nature has set between us—she so beautiful, and I, as she has just said, who only resemble my kind to disgrace it! Yet she sought me first, she led me on, she taught me to think that the utter prostration of the heart was something in her eyes—that a mind like hers could appreciate mind

Fool, fool, that I have been! What have I done, that I should be thus set apart from my kind,—disfigured, disgraced, immeasurably wretched? O! that I might lay my weary head on my mother earth, and die!"

"We could not spare you," exclaimed Lady Marchmont, taking his hand affectionately,—the tears starting in her eyes; "but not for this moment's mortification must you forget your other friends—how much even strangers love and admire you. Think of your own glorious genius, and on the happiness which it bestows. I have but one relative in the world: he is an old solitary man; and I think of him with cheerfulness, whenever I send him a new page of yours. I speak but as one of many who never name you but with admiration and with gratitude."

Pope pressed the hand that yet remained in his own. "God bless you, my dear, kind child! I thank you for calling my power to my mind. She shall learn that the worm on which she trod has a sting."

They loitered a little while, till the irritated host was equal to joining his guests. The boat was ready; and the whole party joined in laughing at Lady Marchmont for her long *l'été-à-l'été* with Pope.

"I am not jealous," cried Lady Mary:

"Ye meaner beauties, I permit ye shine—
Go triumph in a heart that once was mine!"

"I think," said Lady Marchmont, pointedly, "there has been as little heart in the matter as possible; but you shall none of you laugh me out of my cordial admiration of a man of frstrate genius, and whose personal infirmities call upon us for the kindest sympathy."

"By Jove! you are right," cried the Duke of Wharton: "how much vanity may be pardoned in one who has such cause for just pride! He is building up a noble monument in his language, which will last when we, with our small hopes and influences, are as much forgotten as if we had never been."

"I see no great good in being remembered," retorted Lady Mary: "I would fain concentrate existence in the present. I would forget in order to enjoy; as to memory, it only reminds me that I am growing older every day; and as to hope, it only puts one out of conceit with possession."

"All this is very true of our commonplace existences," replied Lady Marchmont; "but the gifted mind has a diviner element."

"How charming is divine philosophy—
Not harsh and rugged, as dull fools believe,"

exclaimed Lord Hervey, with a sneer.

"With the single exception of Lady Marchmont," said Wharton, "we have all behaved shamefully to-day. How I will admire the next thing that Pope writes! and, what is more, I will ride over to Twickenham to tell him so;" and, having made this compromise with his conscience, the conversation dropped.

From that day, however, all friendship was at an end between Lady Mary and Pope.

How he revenged himself is well known. *His lines yet remain, stamped with all the*

bitterness of wounded vanity and mortified affection. Strange, the process by which love turns into hate. I pity it even more than I blame it. What unutterable wretchedness must the heart have undergone! What scorn and what sorrow must have been endured before revenge could become a refuge and a resource!

CHAPTER XX.

THE MARRIAGE MORNING.

My heart is fill'd with bitter thought,
My eyes would fain shed tears;
I have been thinking upon past,
And upon future years.

Years past—why should I stir the depths
Beneath their troubled stream?
And years that are as yet to come,
Of them I dread to dream.

Yet wherefore pause upon our way?
'Tis best to hurry on;
For half the dangers that we fear,
We face them, and they're gone.

The morning came when Norbourne Courtenaye was to marry his cousin. He and his mother had arrived at Norbourne Park the evening before, as it had been settled that the ceremony was to be performed in the little chapel Lord Norbourne had himself built. At one time he had spent large sums of money on the house, but that was when he had hoped for a son; of late years he obviously directed his views in another channel. He had pulled down a great part of the building, while he increased his landed property to a vast extent; but all his purchases were adjacent to the Courtenaye property, which, when united with his own, would make one of the finest estates in England. He had long gone back upon the ancient honours of his house, instead of his once hope to be the founder of another line.

In the little, as in the great things of life, are to be found the type and sign of our immortality. Every hope that looks forward is pledge of the hereafter to which it refers. Who rests content with the present? None. We have all deep within us a craving for the future. In childhood we anticipate youth; in youth manhood; in manhood old age; and to what does that turn, but to a world beyond our own? From the very first, the strong belief is nursed within us; we look forward and forward, till that which was desire grows faith. The to-come is the universal heritage of mankind; and he claims but a small part of his portion who looks not beyond the grave.

The house was alive with bridal preparations—still there was but little mirth. Lord Norbourne had, as well as Mrs. Courtenaye, impressed his character on his household. His lordship's was quiet, obedient, and perfect in all mechanical arrangement; the lady's was staid, slow, and solemn. Merriment appeared a sort of excess to either, at least while

in the atmosphere of either master or mistress. The day itself was miserably dull; a thick fog shut out the landscape, while a few of the nearer trees alone were visible, spreading out their thin spectral arms on the murky air. Over head, the sky was of that dull leaden hue to whose monotony even a dark cloud would be a relief. It was as if the most smoke like of earth's vapours had obscured the fair face of heaven.

It was curious to look within each chamber, and mark the different employ of the principal individuals. Lord Norbourne was seated by a blazing fire, while the whole dressing-room was fragrant with the coffee which had just been brought to him. Mechanically, he was turning over paper, and opening letters; but his thoughts were not with his employ. He looked more anxious than he often allowed himself to look; but then, to be sure, there was no one near to observe it. Suddenly, his glance fell on a casket near; he opened it, and the fire's light shone reflected from its glittering contents.

"Ay," said he, aloud, "these toys make the destiny of woman; and I doubt whether, after all, our own be not equally worthless. Is there any thing worth the exertion of procuring it? Thank God, we grow accustomed to our daily yoke; and it is habit, and habit only, that enables us to get through life. Would that I could put my head, for a few hours, on Norbourne's shoulders. 'If young people would but consider,' says a moral essay that I have somewhere read: it would be putting the thing much more rationally, to say, if young people would but let us consider for them, and be satisfied. Youth would be a delightful time, if it were not so singularly absurd; and if the consequences of its vain hopes, and foolish beliefs, did not remain long after themselves had passed way. I, for one, have no wish to live my youth over again;" and the speaker sank back in a gloomy reverie.

Lord Norbourne was a very handsome man, and young looking for his time of life. It was as if the moral energy which was the great characteristic of his mind, exercised its strong control even over time, and forbade it to leave traces of internal struggle on that smooth and polished brow. But to-day the shadow of long past years rested upon it; and in the dejected attitude, the melancholy expression, few would have recognised the bland and stately bearing which generally defied scrutiny in Lord Norbourne. Suddenly, he started from his seat.

"Folly!" exclaimed he, "to waste my time in these miserable recollections! I have decided that Norbourne shall marry Constance. It is life to her, and every thing that makes life worth having to him. Wealth, rank, and power—these may surely weigh in the scale against a boy's fancy;" but the speaker's countenance again darkened, and he was silent. "This is worse than foolish," said he, in a low and determined tone: "of all follies that we can commit, the greatest is to hesitate."

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So saying, he took up the case of jewels; and, with his usual smile, and quiet step, sought his daughter's chamber.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE TOILETS.

Bring from the east, bring from the west,
Flowers for the hair, gems for the vest;
Bring the rich silks that are shining with gold,
Wrought in rich brocade on every fold.

Bring ye the perfumes that breathe on the rose,
Such as the summer of Egypt bestows;
Bring the white pearls from the depths of the sea—
They are fair like the neck where their lustre will be.

Such are the offerings that now will be brought,
But can they bring peace to the turmoil of thought?
Can they one moment of quiet bestow
To the human heart, feverish and beating, below?

THE next chamber was that of Mrs. Courtenay. For the first time since her husband's death, she had thrown off her weeds, and put on attire more suited to the occasion. She was richly, yet plainly dressed, in a purple velvet, with a hood of white point lace. Even her silent handmaids were surprised out of their ordinary propriety by her appearance. She waved away, with an impatient gesture of her hand, the mirror that they brought; and, saying she wished to be alone, flung herself on a seat.

"I know not," exclaimed she, "why I should feel this depression and regret. Is not this marriage insure Norbourne all I life can desire—wealth, rank, and security? I wedded, as I thought, for love, faith, and happiness; and what was the end? Years of bitter fear and doubt. Dishonour has stood forever, a spectre, viewless, but dreaded, at my side. That ghost is now laid forever; why, then, am I sad?"

Her own heart told her why. Years had passed since, with a burning cheek and a beating heart, she had knelt by the side of Norbourne's father, and arisen from before the priest and the crucifix, his bride. She thought what a world of sweet emotion sent the light to her eyes, and the colour to her blush, as they wandered together through the silvery shadows of the olive grove. How minutely was the slightest thing imprinted on her memory! She remembered the childish sorrow with which she saw the thicker boughs shut out the sunshine, because she no longer could watch his shadow. She thought, too, how they leant beside the old Moorish well, whose deep water was like a dark and polished mirror—leant gazing each on the image of the other, and then laughed aloud in tender mockery, to think that they should gaze on a shadow with the reality so near; and they looked into each other's eyes with a deeper fondness. With what sweet confidence did they talk of the future; what a loveliness, never noted before, was on the blue sky and the fair earth!

It was the loveliness of love, flinging his own divine likeness over all; and this love, the only spiritual and mighty happiness of

which humanity is capable, was henceforth to be to Norbourn a forbidden word. He loved one, and was to wed another. Earth has no such misery. It is wretchedness to pine through long years of uncertain absence, subject to all the casualties of doubt and distance, feeding on long expectation; till, as the scripture so touchingly says, hope deferred is sickness to the heart: still there is hope, and love has a store of subtle happiness in the many links that memory delights to bind, and whose tender recallings are the dearest guarantee for the future.

It is wretchedness to kneel by the grave of the departed, who have taken with them the verdure from the earth, and the glory from the sky; who have left home and heart alike desolate: but then the soul asserts its diviner portion, looks afar off through the valley of the shadow of tears, and is intensely conscious that here is but its trial, and beyond is its triumph. The love that dwells with the dead has a sanctity in its sorrow; for love, above all things, asserts that we are immortal. But wretchedness takes no form, varied as are its many modes in this our weary existence, like that where the hand is given, and the heart is far away—where the love vowed at the altar is not that which lies crushed, yet not quenched, within the hidden soul. Hope brings no comfort; for there were cruelty and crime in its promises: memory has no solace; it can, at best, only crave oblivion—and oblivion of what? Of all life's sweet dreams, and deepest feelings. Yet, what slight things must, with a sting like that of the adder, bring back the past—too dear, and yet too bitter! a word, a look, a tone, may be enough to wring every pulse with the agony of a vain and forbidden regret.

Mrs. Courtenaye felt that her son needed consolation; and she hurried to his chamber, and had opened the door before she recollected that she could say—nothing. He was already dressed, and alone. He was leaning against the fireplace, and so lost in thought that he did not hear his mother enter.

"My own child!" said she, laying her hand on his forehead. He started—his cheek grew deadly pale; he looked for a moment, and his part was taken.

"Ah! you are afraid I should not have finished my toilet," exclaimed he, with a forced smile; "but do let me admire the result of yours. Why, my dear mother, I did not know how beautiful you were!" and he gazed with a natural touch of pride on the noble face and stately figure, to which time, while it stole freshness, had given dignity.

The tears, in spite of her efforts, swam in her eyes. He would not seem to see them; but, taking her hand, kissed it fervently as he led her forth. Deep and bitter is the grief that shrinks from words, even with those the most loved and trusted; and what a world of unspoken sorrow was in the soul of both mother and son as they crossed the threshold!

CHAPTER XXII.

THE JEWELS GIVEN.

A gentle creature was that girl,
Meek, humble, and subdued;
Like some lone flower that has grown up
In woodland solitude.

Its soil has had but little care,
Its growth but little praise;
And down it droops the timid head
It has not strength to raise.

For other brighter blooms are round,
And they attract the eye;
They seem the sunny favourites
Of summer, earth and sky.

The human and the woodland flower
Hath yet a dearer part,—
The perfume of the hidden depths,
The sweetness at the heart.

"You must wear these to-day, my child," said Lord Norbourn, as, entering dressing-room of his daughter, he laid a box of pearls on her table.

Constance looked up in her father's face tearfully: there was something in his voice so kind, so subdued, so different from its ordinary careless and sarcastic tone; and expression on his features was equally unusual. Touched and encouraged for the first in her life, she flung herself, unbidden, into her father's arms, and he held her tenderly to his heart.

"Are you happy, my child?" asked he in a low broken whisper.

"Happy! my dearest father," exclaimed she, hiding her face on his arm, where she still hung, till he could only see the back of her neck, and even that was rosy with deep blush—"unutterably happy! Ever myself I never dared own, till now, how I loved my cousin. When others taunted me with faults which, God knows, I felt but bitterly, Norbourn always took my part. From him I never heard an unkind word, and have often cried myself to sleep in his arms. As I grew older, I loved him but the more, because such love seemed hopeless. I had dreamt that one so beautiful, so gifted, could waste a thought on myself. But it was my pineness to hope that he might be happy without me, to think of him, to pray for him. And now I know that he loves me (for he would not marry me without,) makes me feel as if I were in a dream, whose only fear is to awake. And you my dearest father, how kind you are to me! Can you forgive me if I tell you there was a time when I thought you did not care for me, because I was not fair as your sisters? It made me feel so lonely, so desolate, and I clung yet more to my love for my father: no one cared for my affection; it was therefore, my own to do with as I would. But his love scarcely fills me with a joy than does yours. O, my father! if I have ever given you cause for pain, if I have ever angered you, forgive me now: tell me the future years, when weary of the hurried

hat you now lead, my care, my affection, will be a comfort to you; tell me, my own dearest father, that you love me!"

While speaking, Constance had raised her head, and gazed eagerly on her father; her cheek was warm, with colour more lovely from its extreme delicacy; her eyes lighted up with the eloquence of excited emotion; and every feature was animated with the impassioned and beautiful feelings of the moment. She looked lovely; and Lord Norbourne, for an instant, forgot the under current of self-reproach, which, though he would not have owned, yet made itself only too forcibly felt within.

"Do I love you?" said he, in answer to her touching appeal: "deeply and dearly, my last, my only child. I have, Heaven knows, nothing to pardon in one who has always been so patient, so sweet, and so good. No, my dearest and gentlest, it is you who must forgive, if, taken up with the cares of the world, in projects that looked only to the future, I have forgotten the womanly tenderness due to an orphan girl; yet you are, you have been, very dear to me, my own sweet Constance."

His voice faltered; for affections, undisturbed for years, swelled within him. Every kindly and warm emotion was awakened, and, for the first time, he felt remorse: he almost trembled to think how completely his daughter was deceived, while he also felt that her happiness could not be dearly purchased. And yet, Norbourne—was he not his victim, and made such by all that was generous in his nature? Had he stood as his uncle was perfectly aware that no wealth, no rank, no worldly advantage, would have moved him; but his mother had been the tie, and Lord Norbourne started to think how mercilessly he had enforced his power. A glance at Constance somewhat reassured him. Could his nephew be long wholly given up to vain regrets, with one so devoted, and so sweet, at his side? Such affection must bring with it hope and healing. For the first time, too, he thought with pity on her who was forsaken. He knew there was some prior attachment. What at this moment might not some young and lovely victim be suffering!

But it was not in his temper to dwell long on vain regrets: he soothed them by turning to the numerous advantages which attended this alliance, and was soon able to say calmly to his daughter,—"Shall I lead you down stairs?"

"A few minutes yet," exclaimed she. "Leave me a little while alone."

The door closed after Lord Norbourne; and Constance flung herself on her knees, and half said, half wept, a thanksgiving for her entire happiness.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE MARRIAGE.

Blind the white orange-flowers in her hair,
Soft be their shadow, soft and somewhat pale—
For they are omens. Many anxious years
Are on the wreath that bends the bridal veil.

The maiden leaves her childhood and her home,
All that the past has known of happy hours—
Perhaps her happiest ones. Well may there be
A faint van colour on those orange-flowers:

For they are pale as hope, and hope is pale
With earnest watching over future years;
With all the promises of their loveliness,
The bride and morning bathe their wreath with tears.

CONSTANCE was yet kneeling when Mrs. Courtenaye entered, who was wholly softened by the attitude, and the tearful eyes that met her as she approached. She did not like Constance: there was a timidity and a gentleness about her, which, to her calm and determined temper, seemed only weakness. Besides, however innocent, she was the cause of her own suffering; and she confounded the unoffending girl with her father. But it was impossible to be quite untouched with Constance's meek sweetness, and she took her hand with a degree of kindness which melted the poor child into tears of tender gratitude. But she was silent, for Constance feared her aunt too much for a burst of the confidence with which she indulged herself to her father. They went down stairs together, and for the bridal party assembled.

The guests had been selected with Lord Norbourne's usual judgment. There were only some three or four, of the highest rank. A young nobleman connected with the ministry, who had come from Sir Robert Walpole to summon Lord Norbourne, on business of the first importance, to London, was the sole cavalier, to the great discontent of the bridesmaids. These were the ladies Diana and Frances, who came with their mother, the Duchess of Pympton, a distant connexion of the family. Tall, dark, with harsh features, from which five-and-thirty summers had stolen all youthful bloom, if they had ever had any, they admitted of no doubt—they were no in judicious choice for the bride. Constance, half hidden in the veil, blushing and agitated, looked, at least, ladylike and interesting; and there was as little room given as possible for a contrast between the appearance of the bride and bridegroom.

The chapel was a small Gothic edifice, which had been built by Lord Norbourne, and who had spared no pains on its decoration: yet its chief ornaments were tombs. There was the monument of his wife, and child after child had followed. Every niche was filled by a funeral urn, and by marble shapes that bent down in a pale eternity of sorrow. In

one arch was a marble tablet, bearing a date, but no name; and beneath was a kneeling female: the beautiful hands were clasped as if in prayer and penitence; but the bowed-down face was hidden in the long hair, that fell unbound over the exquisitely sculptured figure. There was a grave beneath, but who slept in that grave was known only to Lord Norbourne. There was in the stillness of the statues around, so colourless, so calm, that which struck cold upon the guests. All around spoke of desolation and of death, till life seemed but a mockery in their presence. What folly to crowd so brief a span with the toil and the fever in which men spend their days! It is a strange and solemn thing that the bridal ritual should take place in the presence of the dead. Dust, that a breath could blow aside, yet that was once, like ourselves, animate with hope, passion, and sorrow, is below; around are the vain memorials of human grief and human pride; yet all alike dedicated to the gone.

Norbourne Courtenaye glanced around on the marble monuments—they seemed fitting company at his bridal: the service sounded like a burial rite; it was the funeral of his hopes. Mechanically he obeyed the directions to place the ring on the finger of his bride. Constance started at the death-cold hand that touched her own; for the first time she ventured to raise her eyes to his, but they answered not to that timid and imploring look: his thoughts were far away. Alas, for Constance, had she known that they dwelt upon another! Even as it was, the pale cheek, and the sad, abstracted eye, sent a chill to the heart of the young bride: she was pale and absent as the bridegroom. When the service was over, she started, as if from a dream, when all pressed round to congratulate her as the wife of Norbourne Courtenaye.

CHAPTER XXIV.

CONFIDENCE.

Fear not to trust her destiny with me:
I can remember, in my early youth,
Wandering amid our old ancestral woods,
I found an undeluged dove upon the ground,
I took the callow creature to my care,
And fain had given it to its nest again:
That could not be, and so I made its home
In my affection, and my constant care.
I made its cage of osier boughs, and hung
A wreath of early leaves and woodland flowers:
I hung it in the sun; and, when the wind
Blew from the cold and bitter east, 'twas screened
With care that never knew forgetfulness.
I loved it, for I pined it, and knew
Its sole dependence was upon my love.

"I UNDERSTOOD, my lord, that you wished to see me," said Norbourne Courtenaye, with the calm, cold manner, that had marked his bearing to his uncle since his marriage had been decided upon: "I fear that I have kept you waiting, for I went first to your own room—"

"It was here," interrupted Lord Norbourne, "that I wished to see you."

He paused, and his nephew stood by with

his arms folded, in silence, as if resolved not to begin the conversation. There was much resemblance between the two: both had the same cast of features. It is curious to remark how a family sets its mark on its descendants: assuredly there is a subtle sympathy in the ties of blood, still one of the mysteries of our nature. But if their old line gave the resemblance, time had marked the difference. The meaning on Norbourne's fine features came direct from the feeling; his eyes were thoughtful, but they had that deep and inward look which belongs only to the dreaming meditations of youth. He wore a saddened and subdued air; it was obvious that he had not yet learned sorrow's bitterest task—that of concealment.

Lord Norbourne's countenance needed closer analysis to detect its hidden meaning. His dark brow was knit, and his darker eye rarely wore any other expression than that of penetration. He looked upon you, and read you through. His features, fine, high, and somewhat stern in repose, were yet capable of being moulded to any meaning it was his will that they should express. Now, though his mouth worked with agitation, it had not lost its bland and habitual smile; but there was that in his face few ever saw in the self-possessed, the cold and reserved Lord Norbourne. He paced the gallery with quick and irregular steps, while his eye more than once met that of his nephew, who, however, preserved a resolute silence.

"This is most unworthy hesitation," exclaimed he at last; and, approaching the fireplace, leaning opposite Norbourne. "I see," continued he, "that you resent my conduct. I do not wonder at it. I reproach myself for it; but, at least, hear me before you utterly condemn me. I find I cannot do without some portion of your good will; for, little as you may believe it, you have ever been dear to me as a child of my own."

The earnestness of his uncle's manner touched Norbourne in spite of himself; and, almost unconsciously, he made a step nearer to him, as he continued:—

"I am ambitious: I own it; for what are a man's talents given, but for a high and influential career? I was ambitious for myself; I am now ambitious for my line. I do take pride in thinking of our house restored to all its original honours. Have you none in knowing the position you will occupy?"

"Do you think," said Norbourne, sternly, "wealth and rank would have tempted me to act as I have done? Lord Norbourne, I tell you to your face, but that you had in your power the name and fame of a beloved mother—ay, and her life too, I would never have married your daughter. I loved—I do love another; but why should I speak of warm and natural emotions to one who knows not of them?"

"Poor Constance!" exclaimed her father.

"Nay," interrupted Norbourne, "do not fear for her. She, at least, shall never know that at the altar where I pledged my faith, did

I also sacrifice my sweetest and my best hopes. She shall not be the victim of your ambition. Carefully will I guard her from any sorrow that rests with me: pity girdles her round with a tenderness, deep almost as love. And now, my lord, I conclude that our conference is at an end: why should we inflict unnecessary pain on each other?"

"Not yet," exclaimed his uncle, yielding wholly to the impulse of strong emotion. "Norbourne, I am neither so callous nor so wordily as you deem me. Look on these portraits!" and he pointed to four pictures that hung on the wall opposite. Never was the painter's skill taxed to give more lovely likenesses of humanity. There were four blooming girls, all drawn at full length; and, though different, it was hard to say which was the most beautiful. "Are not those children of whom any father might be proud?" asked Lord Norbourne. "For years I hoped to have a son; and, when that was denied me, I thought ever of one of those girls as your wife. Years passed by, and each year saw one of those bright heads laid low in the grave. My poor sickly Constance alone escaped the hereditary malady which destroyed her lovely and healthful sisters. A year ago that neglected child, so young, so feeble, and so uncared for, was my nurse through the fever which even the hireling would hardly brave. I loved her with that deep remorseful love which feels that it is a late atonement. I saw (for she is too ignorant and too guileless for disguise) that her heart was wholly yours. I saw her, too, delicate, sensitive; ready to fade away before life's first sorrow. I could not bear to think that disappointed affection should hurry her to an early grave. Norbourne, in the name of the deepest and the holiest feeling that I have, I implore you to forgive me."

Norbourne took the proffered hand; his anger had vanished in sympathy, and they stood for a few moments in agitated silence, which was broken by Lord Norbourne.

"I know that you are now in love: but what is love?—a young man's feverish dream, whose realities, on awakening, he would give worlds to recall. I loved once—foolishly, madly; for I sacrificed every thing to my boyish passion. I married one without fortune or connexion; for her sake I gave up all those higher schemes on which my hopes had fed from very childhood. For her sake I was content to endure poverty, and—far worse—obscurity. Do you wish to see the face which made me—a fool?"

He stepped forward, and touched the spring of a picture-case, which Nourbourne had not before seen opened. He almost started at the dazzling loveliness of the countenance on which he gazed. The large black eyes flashed, as if they realized the old poet's description:—

"Such eyes on Jove had thrown
A lightning, fierce and sudden as his own."

The colour on the cheek was rich and elo-

quent, and the small mouth curved with a consciousness of its own loveliness. It was one of those faces that at once appeal to the imagination: you feel that there must be a history belonging to it. You have a foreboding of passion, and its fulfilment, despair.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE RESULT.

And this, then, is love's ending. It is like
The history of some fair southern clime:
Hot fires are in the bosom of the earth,
And the warm'd soil puts forth its thousand flowers,
Its fruits of gold—summer's regality;
And sleep and odours float upon the air,
Making it heavy with its own delight.
At length the subterranean element
Bursts from its secret solitude, and lays
All waste before it. The red lava stream
Sweeps like a pestilence; and that which was
A garden for some fairy tale's young queen
Is one wild desert, lost in burning sand.
Thus it is with the heart. Love lights it up
With one rich flush of beauty. Mark the end:
Hopes that have quarrell'd even with themselves,
And joys that make a bitter memory;
While the heart, scorcht and wither'd, and o'erwhelm'd
By passion's earthquake, loathes the name of love.

BOTH stood for a few moments gazing on the picture; when Lord Nourbourne exclaimed, as he saw his nephew's look of admiration,—“Yes, the bait was fair enough; and how was I repaid for my utter devotion—for the sacrifice of my future? By desertion. She left me for another—how immeasurably my inferior! I had my revenge, for I followed them abroad. She had already been false to him as to me. He was alone, but not the less did I avenge my dishonour: we met, and he fell. Years afterward, and I met her also; changed, but lovely, amid sickness and want. I saved her from destitution, and saw her once more; for I stood by her death-bed, and forgave her. There is a grave, without a name, in yonder chapel: she so fair, and so frail, sleeps below.”

Norbourne again grasped his uncle's hand. He could not speak: it was as if, for the first time in his life, he had looked beyond the seeming surface of humanity. Was it possible that the calm, the polished, the worldly Lord Norbourne could have been shaken by such fierce passion—touched by such soft feelings as he had really known? And yet so it ever is. How little do we know of even our most familiar associates! Hopes, feelings, and passion petrify one after another; the crust of experience soon hardens over the hidden past; and who, looking on the levelled and subdued exterior, could dream of the wreck and ravage that lies below?

“I bought my experience dearly,” continued Lord Norbourne; “but I did buy it. Henceforth woman assumed with me her natural destiny: a toy, if fair, for a vacant hour; a tool, if rich, for advancement in the world. I next married for fortune and family, and I found I had acted wisely. Lady Norbourne and myself got on perfectly together. My house was one of the best appointed in Lon-

don, and her relations deemed it due to one connected with their family to take every opportunity of serving me. We never descended to the vulgarism of a quarrel. People said that neither of us had a heart, but it appears to me that politeness is an excellent substitute. I really felt very uncomfortable when she died. But I hear my travelling carriage; and business has long been to me duty, inclination, mistress, friend. But tell me that we part kindly?"

"My dear uncle!" replied Norbourn, who accompanied the traveller to his carriage with very different feelings from what, an hour before, he had deemed it possible that he could have entertained.

A feather on the wind, a straw on the stream—such are, indeed, the emblems of humanity. We resolve, and our resolutions melt away with a word and a look: we are the toys of an emotion. And yet I think Norbourn was right in his sudden revulsion in favour of his uncle. We are rarely wrong when we act from impulse. By that I do not mean every rash, and wayward, and selfish fantasy; but by allowing its natural course to the first warm and generous feeling that springs up in the heart. Second thoughts are more worldly, more cold, and calculate on some advantage. This is what the ancients meant when they said that the impulse came from the gods, but the motive from men. Our eager belief, our ready pity, our kindly sensations—these are the materials of good within us. As one of our poets says, with equal truth and beauty, "The heart is wise." We should be not only happier, but better, if we attended more to its dictates. Half the misery in the world arises from want of sympathy. We do not assist each other as we might do, because we rarely pause to ask, do they need our assistance? And this works out the moral of suffering: we need to suffer, that we may learn to pity.

CHAPTER XXVI.

LADY MARCHMONT TO SIR JASPER MEREDITH.

There is in life no blessing like affection;
It soothes, it hallows, elevates, subdues,
And bringeth down to earth its native heaven.
It sits beside the cradle pillow hours,
Whose sole contention is to watch and love;
It bendeth o'er the death-bed, and conceals
Its own despair with words of faith and hope.
Life has nought else that may supply its place:
Void is ambition, cold is vanity,
And wealth an empty glitter, without love.

MY DEAREST UNCLE,—I have this morning been returning the visit of the young Dutchess of Marlborough. I should lose the reputation that I am gradually acquiring among our impenetrables here, were I to confess the excitement which I felt at the idea of entering his house—the house of that great general under whose command you made your first charge. It was to be quite a visit *d'amitié*, so she was almost alone, in her closet richly furnished with crimson silk hangings, and the portraits of her father and mother. I was struck, not so much

with the extraordinary beauty of the latter, though extraordinary it is, as with its extreme sweetness. I never saw such a loveable face. The imperious dutchess had the eyes of a dove, and the mouth of a child; and the hair had that soft, glossy silkiness which I fancy usually belongs to a gentle and sensitive temperament. I could not help alluding to its loveliness.

"Yes," said the young dutchess, "my mother's hair was quite remarkable, both for its length and profusion. But will you believe that she cut it all off one day, in order to plague my father, whose especial admiration it was. He had left her displeased about some trifle, and she severed the favourite tresses, and laid them in a conspicuous place on a table in his room. The long curls disappeared, no one knew how, and my father never made the slightest allusion to their loss; but, after his death, they were found in his cabinet, where he kept all that he had most precious. Even my mother's haughty temper was fairly subdued by this; she never could allude to the circumstance without tears."

"After all," said Mr. Congreve, who was present, "*madame la duchesse* well understood the principles by which your sex obtain dominion. I always thought that there was great truth in what the French lover said, on being asked by what means his mistress had obtained such an empire over him: '*C'est qu'elle me querelle toujours.*'"

"I rather think," said a youthful Italian, just presented to me as la Signora Rosalba, and who was employed in finishing a miniature of the dutchess, "that nothing gives offence between people who really love each other. The tempers may be irritated, but there is still a secret sympathy in the hearts."

"Moreover," replied Congreve, "it was a sort of flattery to the duke. It showed that she valued the power of plaguing him more than her own fairest ornament. Flattery is the real secret by which a woman keeps her lover."

"Ah!" exclaimed the Italian, raising the softest dark eyes that I ever saw, "you speak of the love in crowds and cities, made up of falsehood and vanity, not of that high and holy passion, sent to elevate and redeem our nature—the religion of the heart."

There was something about the youthful artist, that interested me exceedingly. I must ask her to take my likeness for you. Painted by one so enthusiastic, it will come less surrounded by the vanities and follies of my present life. I never feel the value of affection so much as when I think of yours; nor its want, but when I look at my own home.

Well, I sometimes think that I should be glad to quarrel with Lord Marchmont, even like the Duke and Dutchess of Marlborough: it would show that we cared for each other. But I must write something else than these vague fantasies: and now for their very antipodes, Mr. Congreve. He is not badlooking, and dresses to desperation; with a peculiarly soft and flattering manner. He seems to be

ty against his will; and if, by some sally it will have its way, he makes you laugh, is at once ashamed, and starts back into usual languid and affected strain of comment. Nature has made him an author and wit; he blushes for both, and trusts that they are forgotten in the very fine gentleman. He was struck with the difference between his all affectation of denying and despising his talents and their laudable use, and the most belief in their nobility which exists in an Italian artist. The one belongs to a higher order of intelligence than the other.

Well, enthusiasm is the divine particle in composition: with it we are great, generous, and true; without it, we are little, false, and mean. Do let me tell you one thing the *mora* said: "I always pray in German—my language is so expressive and energetic." He wished at the moment that I knew it, that I might pray for you, my dear uncle—my more in parent.

We are going to-night to a ball at the stiches of Queensberry's. I wonder she is not afraid at the world of disappointment her irritations have created. She has asked everybody but those who expected it. People are really not half thankful enough to her, she owes them so much to talk about. What, after all, is the great staple of conversation?—Folly, the faults and follies of others; and, generally speaking, they are insipid enough. How grateful, therefore, we ought to be to grace, whose follies are all of the most genial order! Why, there is invention enough in them for a history,—

"As histories are in these degenerate days."

And now for the toilet of your affectionate
HENRIETTA.

CHAPTER XXVII.

LADY MARCHMONT TO SIR JASPER MEREDITH.

Mind, dangerous and glorious gift!
Too much thy native heaven has left
Its nature in thee, for thy light
To be content with earthly home.
It hath another, and its sight
Will too much to that other roam;
And heavenly light, and earthly clay,
But ill bear with alternate sway:
Till jarring elements create
The evil which they sought to shun,
And deeper feel their mortal state
In struggling for a higher one.
There is no rest for the proud mind,
Conscious of its high powers confined;
Vain dreams and feverish hopes arise,
It is itself its sacrifice.

Is it not Le Sage, my dearest uncle, who says, "to judge by their own account, the people of England are the most unhappy people under the sun—with religion, liberty, and property; also, three meals a day?" He is not far wrong, for nothing strikes me more forcibly than the universal tendency to mumble; conversation and complaint are synonymous terms. Our weather and our government are equally bad—at least every one says that they are.

I was at the dinner yesterday, which, you know, has long been the subject of my anticipation—the one at Lady Oxford's, where I was to meet Pope, Swift, Gay; in short, all the wit in the world. We had a delightful day: the dinner—and though it is difficult to appreciate an enjoyment into which you cannot, for the very life of you, enter—still I begin to think that a good dinner is, at least, the steppingstone to masculine felicity. The cook is one of the three Fates. Lady Oxford is a very good hostess. Without being clever enough to put people on their guard, she understands talent, which none can do without some of their own; and has a peculiar tact for putting a person's *amour propre* at rest by putting it in the best light. She knows how to ask questions judiciously: and it is a first requisite to make people feel it is easy to answer you; and, also, that their answer reflects credit on themselves.

You see that I am studying my part as future *dame de château*. I hope, in time, to make my house the most brilliant in London; but I do not agree with Lord Marchmont in thinking that wealth is the only thing requisite. Wealth is to luxury what marble is to the palace—it must be there as the first material; but taste, and taste only, can direct its after use. The light arch, and the graceful column, owe their exquisite proportion to the skill with which they are modelled.

But I am wandering away from the assertion that I was about to make; namely, that, with all the appliances of cheerfulness, with all the means of wit, the chief portion of the "table-talk" turned upon individual and general grievances. Each person was the most injured individual under the sun. Swift was, however, the one that most excited my sympathy. There is a stern melancholy in his dark features, inherent and engrossing, which rivets the attention. The brow is black and overhanging, and the eyes gloomy while in a state of repose; but, when they kindle, it is like living fire, with a sort of strange animal fierceness in them. His laugh is suppressed and bitter; and I shall not easily forget the sarcasm of his smile as he told us of the Prince of Orange's harangue to the mob at Portsmouth: "We are come," said he, "for your good—for all your goods." "A universal principle," added Swift, "of all governments; but, like most other truths, only told by mistake." His manner is abrupt, and yet I could fancy it very kind sometimes; and he is more eloquent than I ever before heard in general society. Nothing could be more gloomy than the picture he drew of his residence in Ireland. It is that worst of solitudes, an intellectual one: above all things, the mind requires interchange. The heart may, perhaps, shut itself up in itself, as the motto on a pretty French seal that I have, says,—

"Avec les souvenirs et les esperances
L'on se passe de bonheur;"

but the mind frets that only feeds upon its own resources. Swift's existence is one of

the intellect: he does not look to the pleasures, to the affections, to the small employments of life; every sentence, however careless, betrays his contempt for them. He needs an active and stirring career—he needs to be taken out of himself—communication and contradiction are to him necessary elements; and, in the dull seclusion of his Irish deanery, he is wholly shut out from them. “It closes round me like a pall:” I cannot tell you the impression these words made upon me; they conjured up so many hours of dulness and of discontent. It must be so mortifying to a man, the consciousness of talent, and the knowledge that he is shut out from the sphere to which its exercise belongs. But here, again, is the old variance between nature and fortune; each seems to delight in marring the work of the other.

There was one contrast in Swift with his fellow wits: they grew gayer as the dinner progressed, he did not. At first, his conversation was very lively—a sort of fierce vivacity, like a bird or beast of prey dashing at its game. He gave a very amusing account of his journey from Ireland; how he was not only stopped at the “Three Crosses,” by a shrew of a landlady, but scolded into the bargain. His revenge was most characteristic. “Most people,” said he to the landlord, “are content or discontent with paying their bill. I do more: I leave you, as a legacy, an invaluable piece of advice,” pointing to some lines that he had written, with a diamond ring, on the window pane,—

“There are three crosses to your door,
Hang up your wife, and there’ll be four.”

As the evening closed in, I was struck with the gloom which seemed to fall upon him. His face lost its intellectual animation—it was almost stupid; and I never before saw blank despondency so expressed in human eye. Even now I try to shake off the painful impression. But I must leave the remainder of the dinner till to-morrow, trusting that you will not say,

“Un diner rechauffé ne valut jamais rien.”

We are going to play loo at Mrs. Howard’s; but, alas! though he is the fashion, I am quite inaccessible to the fascinations of Pam. Good-by till to-morrow.

Your affectionate
HENRIETTA.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

LADY MARCHMONT TO SIR JASPER MEREDITH.

Life’s best gifts are bought dearly. Wealth is won
By years of toil, and often comes too late:
With pleasure comes satiety; and pomp
Is compass’d round with vexing vanities:
And genius, earth’s most glorious gift, that lasts
When all beside is perish’d in the dust—
How bitter is the suffering it endures!
How dark the penalty that it exacts!

MY DEAREST UNCLE,—I return at once to the dinner at Lady Oxford’s. Mr. Pope was

within two of me at table. At first our meeting was a little awkward: he could not forget that I had witnessed his mortification. Pope is more pettish than the Dean of St. Patrick’s. He could not, I am persuaded, even comprehend the other’s deep misanthropy. He takes pleasure in what Swift would disdain. I cannot imagine the dean laying out grass-plots, and devising grottoes; he has no elegant tastes,—sources, it must be acknowledged, of great gratification to the possessor. Pope, moreover, is greedy: such a dinner he devoured, and then talked of his moderation! I do not think that he would have given Swift’s answer to Lord B—, who tried to persuade him to dine with him by saying,—“I will send you my bill of fare.” “Send me,” was the reply, “your bill of company.” Still, I am charitable enough to make great allowance for the capricious appetite of an invalid, more than I do for his predilection for Mrs. Martha Blount, who was also of our party. She is undeniably handsome—what you gentlemen call a fine woman; but she has cold, unkind eyes, and thin lips, which she bites. Now, if a bad temper has an outward and visible sign, it is that. I hear that she has great influence over the poet, and can readily believe it. He is affectionate, and keenly sensitive to his personal defects; and would, therefore, be at once grateful for, and flattered by, any display of feminine kindness. Moreover, in all domestic arrangements, it is the better nature that yields; a violent temper is despotic the moment that it crosses your threshold. I disliked her, too, for her depreciating way; she had an *if* and a *but* for every person named. Now, the individual who can find no good in any one else has certainly no good in himself:

“How can we reason but from what we know?”

Pope talked very readily and playfully about his translation of Homer: for, example, some discussion arising about what flower was meant by the asphodel of Homer, he said, laughing,—“Why, I believe it to be the poor yellow flower that grows wild in our fields: what would you say if I had rendered the line thus,—

—‘The stern Achilles
Stalk’d through a mead of daffodillies!’”

He also told me an anecdote quite as characteristic of the teller as that of Swift’s. There was a Lord Russell, who had ruined his constitution by riotous living. He was not fond of field sports, but used to go out with his dogs to hunt, for an appetite. If he felt any delightful approaches of hunger, he would cry out, “O, I have found it!” and ride home again, though in the middle of the finest chase.

“You see,” said Pope, “there is no fool without some portion of sense.”

Gay gave me more the idea of a clever child; he was dressed with the greatest neatness, and did not dislike a little rillery about his toilet. He has a sweet, placid expression of countenance; and an excellent appetite, which quite belied the melancholy manner in

which he told us of his disappointments at court. He quoted that deeply pathetic passage of Spencer's,—

"Full little knowest thou, who hast not tried
What hell it is, in suing long, to bide;
To lose good days, that might be better spent;
To waste long nights in penative discontent;
To speed to-day, to be put back to-morrow;
To feed on hope, to pine with fear and sorrow;
To fret thy soul with crosses and with cares;
To eat thy heart through comfortless despairs;
To fawn, to crouch, to wait, to ride, to run,
To spend, to give, to want, to be undone."

Yet there was something so irresistibly ludicrous in his manner, that there was not one of us but laughed at his misfortunes.

Alas, for human nature! even grief must take an attitude before it can hope for sympathy. I now understand on what principles our widows wear weeds, and our judges wigs. The imposing external appearance is every thing in this world.

The Duke and Dutchess of Queensberry, however, have taken Gay under their especial patronage; and he lives with them. And now that the day is over, there is one great regret, which is, that, with all my wish to tell you every thing, I can remember so little. But the spirit of conversation cannot be caught and recorded: moreover, of all our faculties, memory is the one the least under our control. I am sometimes amused, but oftener provoked, at the way in which a thing utterly escapes recollection, and then comes back when least expected, and, usually, when least wanted. Still my general impression is that of great interest and amusement; and you know, my dear uncle, you spoil me, by saying, "Only tell me every thing—your telling is enough." All my details, at least, serve to show you how anxious I am to make you acquainted with every thought of

Your affectionate

HENRIETTA.

CHAPTER XXIX.

LADY MARCHMONT TO SIR JASPER MEREDITH.

COURTIERS.

Not in a close and bounded atmosphere
Does life put forth its noblest and its best;
'Tis from the mountain's top that we look forth,
And see how small the world is at our feet.
There the free winds sweep with unfetter'd wing;
There the sun rises first, and dings the last,
The purple glories of the summer eve;
There does the eagle build his mighty nest;
And there the snow stains not its purity.
When we descend the vapour gathers round,
And the path narrows: small and worthless things
Obstruct our way; and, in ourselves, we feel
The strong compulsion of their influence.
We grow like those with whom we daily blend:
To yield is to resemble.

AN, my dearest uncle! now I find the truth of what you used to tell me. I once thought that you drew human nature in too dark colours; I now begin to think that is wholly impossible. Here we are flattering and hating, envying and caressing, duping and slandering, complimenting and ridiculing, each other. I

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really doubt whether there be such a thing as a heart in the world: perhaps, after all, it is only an elegant superfluity kept for the use of poets. Certainly we have no use for it here.

In consequence of the recent death of the king, we preserve a decorous appearance of dulness; but black is very becoming to a fair skin, and public mourning never yet interfered with private gayety. I hear that his present majesty complains that he is no better off as king than he was as prince; the queen commanding to retain Mrs. Howard as *dame de ses pensées*. She is right; it is only positive qualities that are dangerous, and Mrs. Howard is made up of negations: not, I dare say, that she ever said a good downright "no" in her life. But you must make her acquaintance personally. Fancy a tall and fine figure in a green taffety dress, set off with rose-coloured ribands, both colours well suited to her fair hair and skin; a white muslin apron, trimmed with delicate lace; ruffles of the same materials, showing to much advantage a white and rounded arm: a chip hat, with flowers, is placed quite at the back of the light hair, which leaves the white and broad forehead exposed. By-the-by, talking of her fair hair, I must tell you an anecdote of the use to which it was once applied. When she and her husband were staying at Ilanover, they asked some people to dinner, and Mrs. Howard was obliged to cut off her luxuriant tresses and sell them to pay for the said dinner! What a beginning! and, alas, what an excuse for any faults in her afterlife! Think of all the wretchedness included in the single word *poverty*: Truly Shakespeare says,—

—"Want will perjure
The ne'er-sain'd vestal."

But to proceed with my description: her features are regular, and the eyes a soft blue; and she is singularly young looking. Mrs. Howard is the very person to look young to the last. What fades the cheek, and marks the brow with lines, but the keen feeling and the passionate sorrow? and of these she is incapable. The only expression of her face is repose; and, I must add, a sweet and gentle repose. An attachment to her would be just an agreeable and easy habit.

My dear uncle must let me borrow one of his own phrases. Mrs. Howard is just the type of a social system, whose morality is expediency, and whose religion is good breeding. In such a close and enervating atmosphere, it is scarcely possible for a generous sympathy, or a warm emotion, to exist. Courtiers and wits crowd round the royal idol, flinging one a compliment, and another an epigram, all ready to be snatched up again; the first to be used to any who may succeed, and the second to be turned against herself: all were alike actuated by selfishness on the smallest scale.

Still, I must say, the life of a maid of honour is no sinecure. Lady Harvey was giving me the description of a day. First there is the getting up early, which I, who should be

E

know seven o'clock in the morning if I were to see it, think a most dreadful way of beginning the day. Then comes the imperative necessity of eating smoked Westphalian ham for breakfast: this is on the principle that imitation is the most delicate flattery. Then to horse—life and limb risked on hired hacks, and over hedge and ditch; the neck in comparative, the complexion in certain, danger. Home, then, they come in the middle of the day; blushing, not “celestial rosy red,” but a good positive scarlet, with the heat; and also with a crimson mark on the forehead, from the pressure of the hat. Then they have to dress in a hurry, put on *pleine toilette* and smiles for the princess's circle, where they stand, simper, and catch cold, till dinner. So much for attendance at court.

In the mean time, Mrs. Howard has found leisure for divers other *adorateurs*. Lord Bathurst even excited the royal jealousy; for the prince intimated to the lady, that all supplies would be cut off, to use a national figure of speech, if any flatteries were held too charming, save his own. This threat, his royal highness thought, was the most effective he could use. We always judge of others by ourselves; and his idea of Cupid's quiver is a rouleau. I heard a droll story of his courtship, in earlier days, of the beautiful Mrs. Campbell, when maid of honour. After sitting in silence for some time, he drew out his purse and began to count his money. The lady pushed his elbow, and down rolled the glittering coin. They say that he has not yet forgiven her—not for the breach of etiquette, but for the risk that the poor dear guineas ran from the crevices on the floor. Lord Bathurst does not appear to me to be a very dangerous rival. I always long to quote two lines from Gay's “Fables:”

“Shall grave and formal pass for wise,
When men the solemn owl despise.”

Lord Peterborough, the romantic, the chivalric, was another of her *adorateurs*,—he who is enough to make one believe in the doctrine of transmigration; for no soul but that of Lord Herbert of Cherbury could possibly inhabit his body.

Lady Mary Wortley Montague, who knows every thing about everybody, has greatly diverted me with the Great Cyrus style of their correspondence. I remember hearing you read—ah, dear uncle, how pleasant were those winter evenings!—of some plant that exists floating on the air, never deigning to touch our meaner earth. The *grands sentiments* of these epistles have a similar kind of existence. One compliment is so very original, that I must quote it. He says,

“The chief attribute of the devil is, tormenting. Who could look upon you, and give you that title? Who can feel what I do, and give you any other? But, most certainly, I have more to lay to the charge of my fair one than

can be objected to Satan or Beelzebub. We believe that they have only a mind to torment because they are tormented,—they, at least, are our companions in suffering; but my white devil partakes of none of my torments.”

He concludes by exclaiming,—

“Forgive me if I threaten you: take this for a proof, as well as punishment. If you can prove inhuman, you shall have reproaches from Moscow, China, or the barbarous quarters of Tartary.”

How he was to carry this “last bold threat” into execution, I know not. However, do not be too sorry for him: he has consoled his misery in the smiles of Mrs. Robinson. Perhaps he may urge with Mrs. Howard, that she had such influence over him that he even followed her advice. In one of her answers she recommends a little inconstancy, and says, “Successful love is very unlike heaven, because you may have success one hour, and lose it the next. Heaven is unchangeable. Who can say so of love? In love there are as many heavens as there are women; so that if a man be so unhappy as to lose one heaven, he need but look for another, instead of throwing himself headlong into hell.”

Some of our fine gentlemen about town would say that this is what his lordship has actually done; or, what is much the same, he is married: for they do say that there is a secret marriage between him and the fair Anastasia. I passed her in his berlin the other day, and just caught a glimpse of very pretty features, with an interesting and sad expression. I believe that she is his wife, because I always believe for the best. This I do for the sake of originality—one likes to do differently to everybody else.

I must conclude with a characteristic ejaculation of Lord Portmore—a sort of plaster cast, in bread and milk, of Lord Harvey, who has quite a sect. Lord Portmore is about to build a house. A very fine situation was proposed to him, where he might have a noble view of the ocean; but he started back, with an attitude of terror Betterton might envy, when Hamlet meets his father's ghost, and cried out,—“O, Christ! the sea looks so fierce that it frights me!”

And now good night. If they do nothing else, my long letters ought to put you to sleep. Once for all, I make no apologies for their egotism or their incoherency. The first you will take as a thing of course. Writing to you is thinking on paper; and as to the second, things here happen too fast for me to sort them. You must take my events as I do the ribands from my box—I snatch the first that comes to hand, from not having a moment to choose between them. I fear, however, that I cannot have left you an atom of patience; but still bear with, and love

Your affectionate

HENRIETTA.

CHAPTER XXX.

A FIRST DISAPPOINTMENT.

The deep, the long, the dreaming hour,
That I have past with thee,
When thou hadst not a single thought
Of how thou wert with me.

I heard thy voice, I spoke again,
I gazed upon thy face;
And never scene of actual life
Could bear a deeper trace.

Than all that fancy conjured up,
And make thee look and say;
Till I have loathed reality,
That chased such dream away.

Alas! this is vain, fond, and false;
Thy heart is not for me;
And, knowing this, how can I waste
My very soul on thee?

BELIEVE that, to the young, suspense is most intolerable suffering. Active misery brings with it its own power of endurance. What a common expression it is to us,—“Well, if I had known what I had to through beforehand, I should never have believed it possible that I could have done it.” It is a dreadful thing to be left alone with our imagination, to have to fancy the worst, yet not know what that worst may be; this, in early youth, has a degree of acuteness which that after years cannot know. As we advance in life, we find all things here too early worthless to grieve over them as we could grieve: we grow cold and careless; the dust, to which we are hastening, has entered into the heart.

But no girl of Ethel Churchill's age could do this “inevitable creed.” Hitherto she had thought but little—she had only felt. She loved Norbourne Courtenay without a doubt, and without a fear. To her it seemed natural to love him, that his affection appeared a thing of course, the inevitable consequence of her own. A sweet instinct soon told her that she was beloved, and it wanted confirmation of words. Words are for the worldly, the witty, the practised; not for the simple, the timid, and the impassioned. It never occurred to her to question of the future; every thing was absorbed in the intense happiness of the present. She saw him go, untroubled by a vow, unbound by aught of promise; yet his change never crossed her mind. She was sad to part with him—very sad; it was the sunshine past from her daily existence: the sadness was unmixt with fear. He had never said that he would write, yet she had relied upon his writing; simply because she felt that, in his place, she would have written.

Norbourne was very wrong not to write. True, he was so situated that an explanation was impossible; still a letter would have been consolation, and she would so readily have

believed whatever he had written. He said to himself, “How can I write? what shall I write? It is impossible to tell her on whose sweet face I have gazed till, though the soft eyes were never raised, she knew that I could not but look; she by whose side I have lingered hours—how can I tell her that I am about to marry another?”

Day by day passed by, and Ethel remained in an uncertainty that grew more and more insupportable. It was sad to mark the change that was passing over her. Her soft colour faded, or else deepened with feverish agitation. Her step, that had been so light, now loitered on its way;

For nothing like the weary step
Betrays the weary heart.

She used to bound through the plantations, her eye first caught by one object then another, gazing round for something to admire and to love. Now she walked slowly, her eyes fixed on the ground, as if, in all the wide fair world, there was nothing to attract nor to interest. She fed her birds carefully still; but she no longer lingered by the cage to watch, nor sought to win their caresses by a playfulness that showed she was half a child. Now her work dropped on her knee, and her book fell from her hand; she was perpetually seeking excuses for change of place; and the change brought added discomfort. The sole thing to which she turned with any wish to do, was the frequent visits that she paid to Sir Jasper Meredith.

The restraint that she put upon herself, while with her grandmother, was too much for one so young and unpractised; it was so hard to talk on every subject but the one of which her very soul was full: but going to that kind old man was a relief—it brought its own reward, because it was a kindness. It soothed her to feel that she was of importance to any one; and she was so grateful to Henrietta for her affectionate notes and messages—her friend, at least had not forgotten her. Moreover, she took a strange pleasure in seeing Sir Jasper Meredith receive letters: it was the heart hovering about the object that was yet consuming it. By degrees their conversations grew more and more interesting. A few weeks before, there would have been nothing in herself that responded to his gloomy views of humanity; now she felt their truth in her own depression.

The old poet pursued the usual course, when he said,—

“When I am sad, to sadness I apply
Each leaf, each flower, each herb, that I pass by.”

Ethel looked on the fair face of nature only to see one image, and she now surrounded it with all the agonies of doubt.

CHAPTER XXXI.

AN OLD MAN'S VIEW OF LIFE.

We tremble even in our happiness;
Hurried and dim, the unknown hours press
Heavy with care or grief, that none may ever guess.

The future is more present than the past:
For one look back a thousand on we cast,
And hope doth ever memory outlast.

For hope may fear—hope is a timid thing,
Fearful, and weak, and born in suffering,
At least, such hope as human life can bring.

Its home, it is not here, it looks beyond;
And, while it carries an suchanter's wand,
Its spells are conscious of their earthly bond.

ETHEL used often to go of an evening and pass an hour with Sir Jasper Meredith, who was always glad to see her, and always admitted her into his library. A painter might have taken the scene for some laboratory of the olden time, occupied by an Italian alchemist, and one fair child who had grown up, like a dream of human beauty, amid study and seclusion. She was seated on a low seat by the hearth, wrapped still, more from forgetfulness than cold, in her mantle. The fire-light, which was flickering and uncertain, left her figure in complete shade, but threw sudden gleams of radiance on her face. What a change had a few weeks wrought there!

On the moonlit evening which collected our young party together by the little fountain, Ethel was the cherub of the circle—a very dream of childlike, roseate, innocent loveliness. She had still that peculiar cast of beauty which the immortal artists of Italy have associated with our idea of angelic nature; but it was now that of a seraph, who has both knowledge and pity. The long fair hair was thrown carelessly back, while the gleams of the hearth kindled it like burning gold. This made the paleness of the face more conspicuous, and there was an impress of sadness, terrible to mark in one so young. The attitude—the hands clasped, and the form drooping carelessly forward—was one of utter dejection. The eyelashes shone with unshed tears; there was too much uncertainty for the relief of weeping. The large blue eyes were fixed on the fire; dilated and unconscious, they knew not what they saw. Alas! it was too soon with Ethel for the past to engross the spirit, that should have been hopeful and buoyant, so entirely.

"All I hope is," exclaimed Sir Jasper, breaking the silence into which they had gradually sunk,—“that Henrietta will never love. She is guarded against it both by knowledge and ambition. She has not, like most girls, been sedulously kept from considering what is in reality the most important subject they can consider. On the contrary, she has, from the first, been taught to examine and to know the evil which mere selfishness should teach her to shun.”

"You think love, then, to be an evil?" asked Ethel, timidly.

"I look upon it," replied the old man, "as the greatest calamity to which our nature is

subject. What is it but having our happiness taken out of our own hands, and delivered, bound and bartered, into that of another."

"But that other," exclaimed Ethel, "may delight in making it more precious than their own."

"The chances are fearfully against it," replied the old man. "Nature and fate rarely accord their old dark variance. You are by the one formed to be beloved, and to love. As all experience shows, the probabilities are, that you will waste the rich treasure of your affection on one who has none to give in return, or who is wholly unworthy of the gift."

"But," persisted his companion, "experience also shows instances of mutual and enduring affection."

"And how fate prepares the path for love," returned Sir Jasper, "by surrounding it with difficulty, by trying it with poverty and by absence, till the wornout spirit sinks beneath some last disappointment: but this is an uncommon instance. Mutual and lasting attachment is the rarest shape taken by suffering."

"And the sweetest," said Ethel, in so low a voice as scarcely to be audible.

"But what," continued Meredith, "is the ordinary history of the heart? We yield to some strong and sudden impulse. One sweet face sheds its own loveliness over earth. A subtle pleasure, unknown before, enters into the commonest thing. We gaze on the stars, and dream of an existence spiritual and lovely as their own, far removed from all lower cares, from all the meaner and baser portion of our ordinary path. The face of nature has grown fairer than of old; a thousand graceful phantasies are linked with every leaf and flower. The odour that comes from the violet with the last sob of a spring shower, is more fragrant from recalling the faint breathing of one beloved mouth. We turn the poet's page, now, to find a thousand hidden meanings, only to be detected by a passionate sympathy; for poetry is the language set apart for love."

"Ah, how true that is!" exclaimed Ethel, stopping short, and colouring at the idea of betraying that secret which, though the soul's dearest mystery, is never kept from others.

"But this brief abode in fairy land is dearly purchased," continued Sir Jasper; "too late we find that the dominion of another is an iron rule. We doubt, we fear, we dread, only to be at last—how bitterly—undecided! We find that truth is a mockery; and confidence but a laying bare of the heart to the beak of the vulture. We are mortified because we have been duped, and that by means of our kindest affections; hence we grow suspicious. Our feelings are checked, and we are afraid of their indulgence—why give weapons against our own peace? Hence, we become cold, doubtful, stern,—how are the elements of happiness departed from us! It is life's first lesson, and its severest; we shall never suffer so bitterly again, because we can never more know such keen enjoyment: yet this first lesson is but the type of all that are to come. Throughout our weary pilgrimage we are

d and betrayed! One hope after another away like a star in the dim chill light of
ing and reality. Our feelings are ex-
ted; our memory stored with images of

Our mistress deceived us at first, and
friends have gone and done likewise.
I and imbibed, we take refuge in a harsh
ference; the dust of the highway is upon
nd the heart becomes its own tomb. All
etter part of us has gone down to the
, while we sit wearily by its side, the
shadows of what once we were. Life,
all its fever and struggle, has only one
hope left; and that hope, is death!"
The old man's voice sank, like a knell,
the stillness of that gloomy chamber,
he sank back fatigued in his Gothic seat,
ery image of the desolate old age he had
ed. While Ethel, who sat cowering by
earth, was equally the image of youthful
endency. Both were silent; for the aged
was sad to think of the past, and the
g girl trembled to think of the future. A
minutes passed, when both were aroused
their stupor by the entrance of a servant
a letter from Henrietta.

CHAPTER XXXII.

DIFFERENT OPINIONS.

Doubt, despairing, crime, and craft,
Are upon that honied shaft.
It has made the crowned king
Crouch beneath his suffering;
Made the beauty's cheek more pale
Than the foldings of her veil:
Like a child the soldiers kneel,
Who had mock'd at flame or steel;
Bade the fires of genius turn
On their own breasts; and there burn,
A wound, a blight, a curse, a doom;
Bowing young hearts to the tomb.
Well may storm be on the sky,
And the waters roll on high,
When that passion passes by;
Earth below, and heaven above,
Well may bend to thee, O Love!

WHILE this conversation was going on be-
n Sir Jasper Meredith and Ethel Church-
ae of almost a similar kind was progress-
etween the very object of his solicitude
Lady Mary Wortley. After a hard day's
ping, they had come home laden with
ins, and the dressing-room was strewed

Indian fans, ivory boxes, and lace.
They were going to dine *à la carte*, as there
a gay ball in perspective, and they need-
little recruiting. Chloe, who had never
tten his mistress's brilliant suggestion
e pigmies, exhausted his genius in the
t, but exquisite dinner, which he sent up,
which was, at least, duly appreciated by
Mary.

"There is something," exclaimed she,
ning in the composition of one who can
different to the fascination of such an
et as this."

"I own," replied Henrietta, "I never care
I eat."

"More shame for you!" returned her com-

panion; "it only shows how little you con-
sider your duty to yourself."

"My duty to myself!" cried Lady March-
mont; "why, that would be

'Roots from the earth, and water from the spring,'

according to the principles laid down in moral
essays."

"Moral essays are only a series of mis-
takes," interrupted her ladyship: "our duty
to ourselves, is to enjoy ourselves as much as
possible. Now, to accomplish that, we must
cultivate all our bad qualities: I can assure
you I am quite alarmed when I discover any
good symptoms."

"You are laughing!" replied her listener.

"I laugh at most things," returned the
other; "and that is the reason why people in
general do not understand me. A person who
wishes to be popular, should never laugh at
any thing. A jest startles people from that
tranquil dulness in which they love to in-
dulge: they do not like it till age has worn
off the joke's edge. Moreover, there is no
risk in laughing, if a great many laugh before
you venture to laugh too."

"How very true!" exclaimed Henrietta;
"there is nothing so little understood as
wit."

"People cannot bear," replied her lady-
ship, "to be expected to understand what, in
reality, they do not, and are ashamed to con-
fess: it mortifies their self-love. I am per-
suaded, if all gay badinage were prefaced by
an explanation, it would be infinitely better
received."

"Why," said Lady Marchmont, "that
would be sending the arrow the wrong way."

"A very common way of doing things in
this world," was the answer; "and," she
added, "I do not care about being popular:
and, indeed, rather like being hated; it gives
me an opportunity of using up epigrams
which would otherwise be wasted. Our ene-
mies, at least, keep our weapons in play; but
for their sake, the sarcasm and the sword
would alike rust in the scabbard."

"I care much more for being generally
liked than you do," said Henrietta.

"I do not care about it all," replied Lady
Mary; "if I did, I should not say the things
that I do; but, next to amusing, I like to as-
tonish."

"I would rather interest," replied Lady
Marchmont.

"Shades of the grand Cyrus! that volumi-
nous tome I used to read so devotedly,—your
empire is utterly departed from me!" ex-
claimed her ladyship: "I have long since
left romance behind—

'Once, and but once, that devil charm'd my mind,
To reason dead, and observation blind.'

now I look upon my lover as I do my dinner,
a thing very agreeable and very necessary, but
requiring perpetual change."

"What a simile!" cried Henrietta, with
uplifted hands and eyes.

"Believe me, my dear," returned the other

"love is a mixture of vanity and credulity. Now, these are two qualities that I sedulously cultivate: they conduce to our chief enjoyments."

"My definition of love," said the young countess, with a faint sigh, "would be very different to yours."

"Yes," replied Lady Mary, "you have all sorts of fanciful notions on the subject. I know what you would like:—an old place in the country, half ruins, half flowers, with some most picturesque-looking cavalier, who

'Lived but on the light of those sweet eyes!'"

"Well," interrupted Henrietta, "I see nothing so very appalling in such a prospect. How would our thoughts grow together! how would my mind become the image of his! What a world of poetry and of beauty we might create around us! I can imagine no sacrifice in life that would not cheaply buy the happiness of loving and being loved."

"Very fine, and very tiresome," answered the other, with half a yawn, and half a sneer. "How weary you would be of each other: to see the same face—to hear the same voice; why, my dear child, I give you one single week, and then,—

'Abandon'd by joy, and deserted by grace,
You will hang yourselves both in the very same place!'"

"At least," replied Henrietta, "we should carry on our sympathy to the very last. Though I cannot peculiarly admire its coincidence, I should say,

'Take any shape but that.'"

"If it does not take that," cried Lady Mary, "it will take some other just as bad. Believe me, we are all of us false, vain, selfish, inconstant; and the sooner we cease to look for any thing else, the better: we save ourselves a world of unreasonable expectation, and of bitter disappointment!"

"I would not think like you," replied Lady Marchmont, "not for the treasures of the crowned Ind. I devoutly believe in the divinity of affection; and my ideal of love, is affection in its highest state of enthusiasm and devotion. No sacrifice ever appeared to me great, that was made for its sweet sake."

"The Lord have mercy upon such notions!" cried Lady Mary, throwing herself back in her chair.

Sir Jasper would have been tempted to re-echo her ejaculation, and he would have been almost right. To love another, is too often the sad, yet sweet seal, put upon a bond of wretchedness, at least to a woman. How is her earnest, her self-sacrificing, her devoted attachment, repaid?—By neglect, falsehood, and desertion!

CHAPTER XXXIII.

THE END OF DOUBT.

I tell thee death were far more merciful
Than such a blow. It is death to the heart;
Death to its first affections, its sweet hopes;
The young religion of its guileless faith.
Henceforth the well is troubled at the spring:
The waves run clear no longer; there is doubt
To shut out happiness—perpetual shade;
Which, if the sunshine penetrate, 'tis dim,
And broken ere it reach the stream below.

It is strange how we hope, even at hope. The light came into Ethel's eye colour flushed her cheek, when she caught sight of the letter. She believed that it be for her; and it was with a sick feeling of disappointment that she saw the servant by her. I do not think that life has a pang more sickening than that of expectation which does not come. The hour brings the post is the one that is anticipated the only one from which we reckon long the time seems till it comes! With many devices do we seek to pass it a quicker! How we hope and believe each will be our last of anxious waiting! post comes in, and there is no letter! How bitter is the disappointment! a every repetition it grows more acute. immeasurable the time seems till the comes in again! The mind exhausts its conjectures; illness, even death, grow to distinct to hope in its agony—hope to fear! We dread we know not what every lengthened day the misery grows insupportable. Every day the anxiety a darker shadow. To know even the worst of all we have foreboded, affords relief.

The letter which Ethel had watched eagerly, was the usual one from Henry. Her uncle almost snatched it, with hands trembled with eagerness. His whole face lighted up. He read the direction; he looked at the seal with an expression of even like fondness; he hoarded his enjoyment, delaying to break it. At last he opened the letter: he watched the fair Italian handwriting with peculiarly fine; often careless, and times illegible, but never to her uncle. affectionate remembrance was marked with care with which she wrote, lest her might be troublesome to decipher. He looked at it first eagerly; he needed to be assured her health and happiness; then slowly glancing over every word; and then, as was his custom, prepared to read it aloud.

In the mean time, Ethel had leaned her head on her hand, while the large tears trickled slowly through her fingers. Every day of disappointment grew more insupportable. The sight of another's letter filled her with bitterest envy. Suffering cannot come

with bad feelings. It was in vain that she tried to comfort herself; but the question would be, why should Henrietta be so much happy? Scarcely could she command attention when Sir Jasper began to speak that last evening when they were all seated round the table, and the rose with terrible distinctness. The moon shone with the falling moonlight, and Henrietta's eyes seemed to grow more and more intense as they filled with a spiritual ray. Walter Maynard sat beside her, pale and dejected: and nearer to her than to the other guests, stood Lord Norbourn Courtenaye. How well he remembered his tender and earnest gaze, and the small knot of blue harebells on which his glance fell; when, with sweet shame on her face, she looked down, too timid to meet his. A more solemn and deep sense of how utterly she loved him struck upon her heart. She started, and said his name; his name that, saved by her own lips, whispered in the silence of midnight, she had not heard since. Quietly, even carelessly, Sir Jasper was reading the following passage from Marchmont's letter:—

"You remember a young man called Lord Courtenaye, who was staying at the Manor? He has just married his daughter, Lord Norbourn's daughter. It is a match. I thought him *l'epous* with you, Ethel, but the present marriage is of interest. They are just now in the honeymoon: but, with such an I say that it ought to be called the moon!"

It started to her feet, the rich flush that had been on her cheek at the first mention of the name died into deadly paleness. The dew on her forehead, and her eyes dilated with a wild, strange expression; their very lids curdled and glazed. She snatched the letter from Sir Jasper, who started as her hand touched his: she attempted to read for herself, but the letters seemed to swim before her gaze; they turned to fire; they slipped from her grasp; a thick mist gathered over the room; she gave a gasp, a shudder, and dropped on the floor insensible.

Lord Courtenaye had spared her a world of wretchedness, and she never recovered from that trance. Truly did the ancients say, "those whom the gods love, die young!" They fall from the hand unwithered; they close in the sunshine; they go down as if they were an altar, in their prime and of beauty: they are spared the agony—that of endurance, and without expectation.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

CONFIDENCE.

I feel the presence of my own despair;
It darkens round me palpable and vast.
I gave my heart unconsciously; it filled
With love as flowers are filled with early dew,
And with the light of morning.

If he be false, he who appear'd so true,
Can there be any further truth in life.
When falsehood wears such seeming!

SIR JASPER started from his seat; absorbed in his letter, he had not perceived the alteration in Ethel's face, and the noise of her fall was the first thing that drew his attention. At once he felt what was the cause—the marriage he had so unconsciously communicated—and he stood for an instant lost in thought. But he was too much of a chemist not to have remedies at hand, and he raised the inanimate form tenderly, as if it had been his own beloved child, and laid her on the couch. A few minutes sufficed to restore her to life, and also to consciousness. Slowly her scattered senses returned; she gazed on Sir Jasper, but her eye wandered round with an unsatisfied gaze; at last it rested on the letter, which had fallen on the ground.

"It is all true," muttered she, with a faint shudder. She pressed her hands firmly together, but the effort was vain, and she burst into a violent flood of tears. "Forgive me," she exclaimed, "I ought to wait till I get home; but I am wretched, very wretched."

The kind old man did not even attempt to speak; he knew too well the vanity of consolation, to mock her with it; but he took her hand gently, and his own eyes glittered with unusual moisture. An hour before, or an hour after, and Ethel would have locked her secret deep in her inmost heart; but now misery mastered timidity, and it was a relief to speak. Moreover, there was such encouragement in Sir Jasper's gentle and voiceless sympathy.

"I am sure that he did love me," exclaimed she: "young as I am, my heart tells me the truth. Ah, no, it has deceived me! There is no truth in any thing."

"Were you, then, engaged to Mr. Courtenaye?" said Sir Jasper, who asked the question solely to give her an opportunity of expressing the emotion it was too much to restrain.

"He told me he loved me," replied Ethel, in a tone of hopeless dejection, which went to her companion's heart.

"My poor child," said he, "I can urge nothing to comfort you. It will not soften your suffering to know how common it is."

"Common!" exclaimed she.

"Ay, common—too common. Life has many dreams; all sweet, and all fugitive; but love is the sweetest and most fugitive of all. I know nothing of Mr. Courtenaye; but I can perceive enough of this affair to see that he is one of those who, for a moment's selfish gratification, or for the yet meaner love of gratified vanity, will excite the deepest feelings, and trifle with the dearest hopes of all who trust them!"

"It is not possible!" said his listener, almost inaudibly, as Norbourne's open brow, and simple, yet earnest manner, arose on her recollection. His falsehood was too evident, yet she could not bear to hear another say it. It seemed as if she had scarcely believed it, till confirmed by Sir Jasper. All in her mind was confusion; still the paramount sense that predominated over all others, was the bitter conviction of his unworthiness. Any thing but that she could have borne; but to find realized in him all she had ever heard of man's crime and cruelty, darkened the whole world: all belief in goodness had suddenly departed. Still, till Sir Jasper spoke, she felt rather as if labouring under a frightful dream than conscious of a frightful reality. She remained for a few moments in gloomy silence, when the entrance of a servant, with wood for the fire, roused her from her stupor. How strangely do the common domestic events, things of constant and hourly recurrence, jar upon the over-excited nerves! It seems to mock our inward misery to see all but the pulses of our own beating heart, go on so calmly and uniformly. There is an exaggeration in sorrow, which would fain demand universal sympathy: it does not find it, and the sorrow sinks the deeper.

"I am very late," exclaimed Ethel, starting up, and drawing her hood over her face: "dear, dear sir, I will thank you for your kindness to-morrow."

"God bless you, my poor child; but will you take a servant with you—you are not well enough to go home by yourself?"

"I am better alone: it is not five minutes' walk," said Ethel, eagerly.

Sir Jasper let her depart without further remonstrance; he sympathized with the feverish mood that craved the indulgence of solitude; he knew its worth. Ethel hurried along the wellknown path, haunted by so many remembrances. She started from them: she felt as if she must drop, did she pause for a single moment. Never had she made such haste before; and yet it seemed an age before she gained her little chamber; once there, she flung herself on her bed, and gave way to the sorrow with which she no longer struggled. Who among you has not felt the relief that it is, after constraint on some overwhelming misery, to reach the loneliness of your own room, and there yield to the passionate weeping you cannot repress? Ethel was very young, and unaccustomed to grief; her feelings were in all their first freshness; and to *such, forgetfulness seems impossible*: but the

body sinks under the mind, and nature can endure but a portion of suffering. Ethel cried like a child; and, like a child, cried herself to sleep.

There was a strange contrast between that cheerful chamber and its occupant. Every thing around denoted quiet, comfort, and glad and innocent tastes: the walls were of white wainscot, and hung with drawings; bookshelves fastened with rose-coloured riband, and in two recesses were stands of old china, where shepherd's, shepherdesses, and sheep, predominated. An open spinnet was in one corner, and in the other an embroidery-frame, whose half-finished flowers spoke of recent employment. In each of the windows was a beaupot, and the roses were fresh, as if still on their native bough; and in one of the window-seats was a volume of Sir Philip Sydney's "Arcadia:" a few myrtle leaves were scattered on the yet unclosed page, a graceful mark to find the place where the youthful reader had brooded over visions of truth and love, already vanished, like the freshness of those leaves, strewed, as if they were flung on the shroud of departed hope.

The casements were open, and looked on one of the fairest aspects of the garden: and the murmur of branches brought a sense of repose, and a faint perfume that grew every moment sweeter. The sun had set, and a soft purple haze clothed the distance; but a few rosy tints yet floated on the horizon, far from the colourless moon, whose pale crescent pure and lucid as pearl, had just arisen: one single star was on the sky, tremulous and clear, belonging to other worlds—ah, surely, less troubled than ours! It rose just above where Ethel was sleeping, the only agitated thing in all that fair and calm scene: she lay with her head on her arm, and tears

Seem'd but the natural melting of its snow,

as the flushed cheek pressed upon it. Her long bright tresses had escaped from all confinement, and lay around her in rich confused masses, but giving that air of desolation which nothing marks in a woman so strongly as her neglected hair. Her eyes were closed, but the soft eyelids were swelled and red, and the eyelashes yet glittered with tears; a spot of burning red was on either cheek, but the rest of the face was pale; and, even in slumber, the muscles of the mouth quivered. Her breathing was difficult—how unlike its usual hushed and regular sweetness—while every now and then her whole frame was shaken by a quick, convulsive sob. Terrible, indeed, is such sleep; but more terrible its awaking. At first we rouse forgetful; but conscious of something, we know not what. The head is raised with a sudden start, only to drop heavily on the pillow from whence rest is banished in an instant. The eyes close again, but not to sleep; we seek only to shut out the light from which we sicken. But the inward sorrow rises only the more distinct: all is remembered, not a pang is spared; and the very rest given to the body only renders its seem

more acute. Misery has many
ents; but, I believe, the first
after any great sorrow is the one
tter agony. How will it ever be
get through the long, the coming
ry those who have never asked the

CHAPTER XXXV.

AN EVENING ALONE.

Of Fate are dark and terrible;
we may we trace them to the goal.
I doubt the heaven in which I hope,
would vanish, gazing upon life,
what it needs of peace and rest.
It like a journey during night.
rough gloomy paths of the unknown;
footsteps are with pitfalls round;
and faint the stars that guide our way:
at last, comes morning; glorious
h the light of day, and so will shine
n which is our future and our home.

ER watched from his window the
of Ethel, as she ran hastily along
inding path, soon lost in the cop-

"Poor child!" muttered he, re-
seat, and gazing on the wood eme-
flames were gathering into all
lastic shapes, which only ask the
to give them what form it will.
none of the wild beliefs in the
ntains: fire is the element of the
id who can tell what strange visit-
may be during the midnight hours
rcoal-burner sits watching the fit-
tle mystery of flame?

er gazed on these grotesque combi-
their shadows seemed almost pal-
his wearied spirits. He felt him-
g fanciful and superstitious; a pale,
earing first the likeness of Ethel,
hanging to that of Henrietta, but
distorted, appeared distinct in the

The large eyes sought his own,
g for help, and yet unable to do
look their mute asking. Funeral
oated on the air, dark, vague, but
th that white face predominant in

er started from his chair, ashamed
fancies that had, for the moment,
ed him. He approached the win-
sipate them in the fair face of hea-
vening had closed in during his re-
the sweet and silver night had
h her noiseless steps, upon the air.
was usually bare and desolate, but
r softened by the united influence
and of moonlight. There was not
the sky, save a few light vapours
egated near the moon; but even
lustrous with her presence. The
one with silver dews, like a sheet
emulous with the passing wind, and
on the surrounding trees but seemed
of a ray; all around was silent as
as soft. It seemed a world on
dow had never rested, and tumult

—8

had never disturbed; crime, rage, and grief,
had no part in elements so lovingly blended;
the earth was at rest, and the still bright air
slept on her bosom.

But there was something in the tranquillity
that mocked Sir Jasper's unrest: the contrast
was too forcible between the outward and in-
ward world: the one so serene, so spiritual;
the other so troubled, and so actual. He turned
from the window; and, ringing the bell hasti-
ly, ordered the servants to close the curtains.

"If," muttered he to himself, "every place
bore record of the wretchedness that they had
witnessed, they could not thus mock us with
their bright and serene aspect. Folly, of that
dreaming creed of old, to believe that the calm,
far stars, governed the base destinies of earth!
But the world was young then—warm with
the celestial fire that called it into being.
Imagination walked its fresh paths even as a
god, and shed around glorious beliefs and di-
vine aspirations: its presence made beautiful
the planet that it redeemed with its heavenly
essence: but the imagination has exhausted
its poetry; we are given over, wornout, and
yet struggling to the cold and the real. We
know more than we did, but we love less;
and what knowledge is to be acquired on our
weary soil but the knowledge of evil? I look
around, and see nothing but suffering: man-
kind is divided into two classes, in which all
alternately take their place—the tyrant and
the victim. How we torture each other! Not
content with our inevitable portion, with sick-
ness, toil, and death, we must create and in-
flict sorrow!"

At this moment his eye fell upon some
roses that Miss Churchill had brought him:
in the confusion they had been thrown upon
the floor, and trampled upon.

"Just emblems of herself, poor girl," said
the kind old man: "a passing wind from the
south, a transitory gleam of sunshine, and, lo!
those flowers opened to their short and sweet
existence! Now, there they lie, carelessly
crushed; the little period allotted to their
loveliness and fragrance recklessly shortened:
and such is the history of that poor child.
Her young heart has been awakened to its
short summer of hope and love: and how
dreary a winter remains behind! She has lost
much more than her lover: she has lost con-
fidence in affection, and belief in excellence.
Alas for the heart which has surrendered it-
self to an idol unworthy of its faith!—it has
no future.

"And yet," continued he, after a pause,
"it matters little in what shape our sorrow
overtakes us. In all this wide world there is
nothing but suffering: the child cries in its
cradle; it but begins as it will continue. In
all ranks there is the same overpowering mi-
sery: the poor man has all the higher facul-
ties of his being absorbed in a perpetual strug-
gle with cold and hunger: a step higher, and
pretence comes to aggravate poverty; dig we
cannot, and to beg we are ashamed. Go on
into what are called the higher classes, and
there we find ambition the fever of the soul.

and jealousy its canker. There are pleasures; but there is no relish for them; and luxuries which have become wearisome as wants. The feelings are either dull in selfish apathy, that excludes enjoyment; or unduly keen, till a look or word is torture. Then your philosophers, your poets, your men of science—what do they do but spend breathing and healthful life on wasting pursuits, in which the very success only shows how worthless it is to succeed? The mind feeds upon the body: pale sickness, and early decrepitude, overmaster even its spiritual essence. Too late it discovers that this earth is its prison, and not its home: the heart beats, and its pulses are the clockwork of wretchedness: the head examines only to find that all is void and worthless. We feel, and all we feel is misery; we know, and the whole of our knowledge is evil. In one thing has Fate been merciful,—it has placed at the end of our pilgrimage a grave.”

Sir Jasper was right; in a few short years we learn that the “valley of the shadow of death” does but lead to a place of peace, “where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest.” Rest!—how strongly, day by day, does the desire for rest grow upon the human heart! We begin life—how buoyant, how hopeful! difficulties but bring out a healthful exertion, and obstacles stimulate by the resources they call into action. This cannot, and does not last: it is not lassitude so much as discouragement that gains upon us: we feel how little we have done of all we once thought that we could do; and still more, how little that we have done has answered its intention. This I believe to be experienced in every career; but more especially in a literary one. Necessarily dependent on imagination, feeling, and opinion, of how exhausting a nature is both the work and the appeal of literature! Let the successful writer look back a few years, and what an utter sense of desolation there will be in the retrospect! Not a volume but has been the burial-place of many hopes, and the graven record of feelings never to be known again.

How constantly has mortification accompanied triumph! With what secret sorrow has that praise been received from strangers, denied to us by our friends! Nothing astonishes me more than the envy which attends literary fame, and the unkindly depreciation which waits upon the writer: of every species of fame, it is the most ideal and apart; it would seem to interfere with no one. It is bought by a life of labour; generally, also, of seclusion and privation. It asks its honour only from all that is most touching, and most elevated in humanity. What is the reward that it craves?—to lighten many a solitary hour, and to spiritualize a world, that were else too material. What is the requital that the Athenians of the earth give to those who have struggled through the stormy water, and the dark night, for their applause?—both reproach and scorn. If the author have—and why should he be exempt from?—the faults of *his kind*, with what greedy readiness are

they seized upon and exaggerated! How ready is the sneer against his weakness or his error! What hours of feverish misery have been past! What bitter tears have been shed over the unjust censure, and the personal ~~scasm~~ *scasm*!

The imaginative feel such wrong far beyond what those of less sensitive temperament can dream. The very essence of a poetical mind is irritable, passionate, and yet tender, susceptible, and keenly alive to that opinion which is the element of its existence. There may be faults; but they are faults by which themselves suffer most, and without which they could not produce their creations. Can you bid the leopard leave his spots, and yet be beautiful?

Perhaps,—for the divine purpose runs through every aim of our being,—the disappointment and the endurance are but sent to raise those hopes above, which else might cling too fondly to their fruition below. Soon or later dawns upon us the conviction, that the gifts we hold most glorious were given for a higher object than personal enjoyment, and the praise which is of man. We learn to look at the future result, to acknowledge our moral responsibility, and to hope that our thoughts, destined to become part of the human mind, will worthily fulfil the lofty duty assigned to their exercise.

I agree with Sir Jasper in looking forward with a desire that would fain “take the wing of the morning, and flee away, and be at rest.” Worn, weary, and discouraged, the image of death seems like a pleasant sleep—solace, but soothing; when all that now makes the fevered heart beat with unquiet pain will be no more. But I, also, gaze beyond, in all the earnest humility of hope. I believe that the mind is imperishable; and is also the worthiest offering to the Creator. Whatever of thought, of feeling, or of faculties, I may ever have possessed, look to the grave as to an altar, from whence they will arise purified and exalted unto heaven.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

THE CORONATION.

What memories haunt the venerable pile
It is the mighty treasury of the past,
Where England garners up her glorious dead.
The ancient chivalry are sleeping there—
Men who sought out the Turk in Palestine,
And laid the crescent low before the cross.

The sea has sent her victories: those aisles
Wave with the banners of a thousand fights.
There, too, are the mind's triumphs—in those tomb
Sleep poets and philosophers, whose light
Is on the heaven of our intellect
The very names inscribed on those old walls
Make the place sacred.

LADY MARCHMONT TO SIR JASPER MEREDITH.

I SUPPOSE, my dear uncle, that we shall now come to our senses—that is, those who have any senses to which they could come for the coronation is over. We have talked nothing during the last six weeks, but earnestly

velvet. The day has been devoted up and down the room, practising pace with which we were to enter; and all night to dreaming that we should do so well as ourselves. Peers at a premium—that is, the unmarried; not an heiress but would have elements altogether for the sake of the procession. I can assure you I was glad that I was married—glad for the last time, *peut-être*.

I believe me, dearest uncle, when I have times when I could almost love my husband? I often feel, in the perpetual gayety in which I live and so unvalued. One cannot be amused, one would wish sometimes to be. How often have I feelings of sympathy, and thoughts eager for communication! Lord Marchmont would have been the feeling as he could not have thought. Every day shows me the narrowness of his mind, and the hardness of his heart. I do not believe in the whole course of his life, he had no lofty aspiration, or one warm and emotion. He is selfish, but it is on a singularly small scale: he is not called ambitious; for his demand no further than a riband and a wish to influence or to control his subjects by talent and by exertion, would have filled the vacant space called his mind. I am noney, because it is the only shape of flattery, which he can comprehend. He delights in its small miserable pleasures; he likes a fine house, fine dresses, fine inners; they are the material pleasures which alone he is capable of.

It is a plant brought from the kind and of your affection, into a cold and frosty atmosphere—a frosty day in winter found me; while the chill hardens, and I shall soon become a very different woman. Lord Marchmont does not know the passionate and devoted love that is in me.

Well, better that it should there find a way in unbroken slumber, than in the bitter and burning life which is my sole heritage. I do not forget your words. What has love been to our gentle life, how I have wandered from my duty. At all events the external world is not enough; and why should we gaze on the sad and troubled depths of that which is

our state was magnificent—worthy of that I recalled. As I looked round the old abbey—the most glorious tomb ever were enshrined the honours of I marvelled at the indifference with ordinary hours of life treat all that greatness and its poetry. I could not think that I had never had the resolution to be most beautiful and most national before.

It is a strange inconsistency, but never did I seem so much struck with the sad and frivolous life of society. Never

till then did I feel the deep and eternal debt of gratitude that human nature owes to those who assert its higher influence; who feel their generous activity stirred by a thrice noble emulation; who appeal from the present to the future, and redeem their kind, by showing of how much that is good and great ambition and genius are capable. But, I am wandering again,—perhaps from very consciousness that I can give you no idea of the splendid scene, which yet floats before my eyes. No person can have a greater respect for words than myself; they can do every thing but what is impossible: and there is an extraordinary excitement in a crowd, which lives in no description that I ever yet read. It is a strange the influence we exercise over each other. What is tame and cold with the few, becomes passion shared with the many.

When "God save the king!" resounded through the stately abbey, the banners vibrating with the mighty music, I felt quite enthusiastic in my loyalty. I hear that the procession of the peeresses, as each after each stepped through the arch, was quite charming. We ourselves knew the least about it; for we were too much taken up with our own appearance to think about others. After myself, to whom, of course, in my secret heart, I gave the first vote—the beauties of the day were the Dutchess of Queensberry and Lady Mary Wortley Montague. It is, after all, full dress that is the test of the gentlewoman. Common people are frightened at an unusual toilette: they think that finer clothes deserve finer manners, forgetting that any manner, to be good, must be that of every day.

But you should have seen my beauties,—so stately, yet so easy, as if the ermine mantle were familiar as the white and spreading wings are to the swan. Then the fine features were lighted up with a consciousness of looking well, which is one of beauty's most becoming moods. The Dutchess of Queensberry is accustomed to that grace with which poetry invests flattery; but she is fitted to inspire it. Odd, very often rude, setting all common rules at defiance, I yet like her better than most of those with whom I come in contact. The fact is, she is more sincere. Now, let us alter and improve as much as we can; yet nature will have what nothing else can, a hold upon the heart. You will think that I am grown "philosophical, very;" but the fact is, I am quite worn out with yesterday's fatigue. I can do nothing but lie on the couch and write to you. I always grow thoughtful when I am very tired.

We are going next week to a *fête* at Marble Hill, which is given to their majesties by Mrs. Howard. I am very desirous of going, not for the sake of the *fête*, for I am already beginning to look with an elegant indifference on pleasure; but I want to see the bride. Mr. and Mrs. Norbourn Courtenaye will then make their first appearance in public. The seclusion has been very long of their honeymoon; I wonder there was no wish for display before, as the bride is one of our richest

heirresses. Norbourn has only changed suit, and taken the queen of diamonds instead of hearts. I hear that the lady is both ugly and deformed. I wish I could prevail on Ethel to come up to London, if it were but for the sake of eclipsing her arrival. I will stand god-mother to the town's admiration, and promise and vow three things in its name:—first, that she will forget her faithless swain in the multitude of new ones; secondly, that she will be universally ran after; and, thirdly, that she will be brilliantly married.

And now adieu, dearest uncle, my eyes are closing with a rich confusion of banners, velvet and jewels. I must go to sleep for a while, and dream of them.

Your affectionate

HENRIETTA.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

PUBLISHING.

Life's smallest miseries are, perhaps, its worst:
Great sufferings have great strength: there is a pride
In the bold energy that braves the worst,
And bears proud in the bearing; but the heart
Consumes with those small sorrows, and small shames,
Which crave, yet cannot ask for sympathy.
They blush that they exist, and yet how keen
The pang that they inflict!

It was one of those bright days in spring, which are very spendthrifts of sunshine, when the darkest alley in London wins a golden glimpse, and the eternal mist around St. Paul's turns to a glittering haze: but the young man who was hurrying along some of the crowded streets, seemed insensible of the genial atmosphere; he would have been equally insensible of the reverse.

Walter Maynard, for he was the hurried walker, appeared much changed; he was thin and pale, and his cheek had that worn look which tells of bodily suffering. His dress was shabby, and arranged with little of his former attention to appearance: the eyes were larger and darker than of old, while there was an unnatural lustre, which bespoke both mental and physical fever. As he passed along, nothing seemed to catch his glance. He hurried on; and yet, more than once, he came to almost a full stop, as if reluctant, although impatient.

It was with slow and languid steps that, at last, he entered a bookseller's shop: he gave in his name, and the young man, behind the counter, very civilly asked him to wait. He sat down, and mechanically, turned over some volumes that lay beside him; but their contents swam before him. The lover may tremble while waiting for the mistress on whose lip hangs the heart's doom, but I doubt whether he feels equal anxiety with the young author waiting the fiat of his publisher. One figure after another emerged from the room behind, and at each step Walter Maynard felt a cold shudder steal over him; and then he started and coloured, lest his agitation should have been observed; but the shopboy was too

used to such scenes to heed them. He never looked at the white lip, tremulous with hope, which was rather fear; he noticed not the drops that started on the forehead; what little attention he could spare from his business was given to the window; there, at least, he had the satisfaction of seeing the people passing. At last Walter Maynard's turn came: he entered a low, dark back-parlour, whose close and murky atmosphere seemed ominous; a little man was seated on a very high stool, writing at a desk before him.

"Take a seat, Mr. Maynard," said he, in a low mysterious whisper, as if the fate of nations depended on not being overheard. He went on writing, and Walter took his seat, glad of even a momentary respite.

Curl was of very small stature, with good but restless features, and a singularly undecided mouth. He might have sat for a personification of fear: if he moved he seemed rather afraid of his own shadow following him too closely; if he laughed, he soon checked himself, quite alarmed at the sound. He began a conversation at your elbow; but before it was finished, he had gradually backed his chair to the other end of the room. He always contrived to sit next the door, to which he paid more attention than to his hearer; his eye always wandering to it as if he meditated an escape, and yet this man was the most audacious libeller of his time. Reputation, feelings, or even chastisement, were as nothing in the balance weighed against his interest; life was to him only a long sum; his ledger was his Bible, and his religion, profit. For a little while he went on writing: this he did on principle.

"Authors," he was wont to say, "come in a direct line from Reuben; they are unstable as water, and never know exactly what it is they really do want. I always give them a little waiting, just to show I don't care much about them, and so grow something rational in their demands."

At last Curl descended from his stool, and drew a chair towards Walter. Dividing his looks between him and the door, he began:

"I have been looking at your pamphlet, and showing it, but I mention no names. I don't see the use of names, for my part, unless it be to put in asterisks. It is—yes—very, indeed."

"What?" exclaimed Walter.

"Yes, extremely so," replied Curl.

"You think it, then, clever," returned the anxious listener.

"Why, my good young friend," exclaimed the publisher, glancing suspiciously at the door, "you would not have me tell an author to his face that his works were not clever? You are too irritable a race for that!"

"But do you think that it will suit you?" asked Maynard.

"Why, no—no—yes, perhaps; but we must talk a little about it. You reason too much; all young people are so fond of reasons, as if reasons were of any use."

"Why," cried his companion, "mine is a

dispassionate appeal to the reason of the public: my object is to convince."

"As if you ever convinced people by reason!"

"But I feel it is a duty I owe to the public," said the author.

"Good Lord! O, Lord! Why, my dear sir, what duty do you owe to the public? The only duty you owe is to me, your publisher! It is your duty to write what will sell, and I tell you reasons are unmarketable commodities."

"What would you have me do?" sighed Maynard, in a desponding tone.

"Why, pepper and salt your reasons!" cried Curl, forgetting to look at the door for a moment: "your pamphlet has talent; but talent is like a cucumber, nothing without the dressing. You must be more personal."

"I detest personalities," said Walter.

"And I detest nonsense," said the other; "and I also detest works that won't sell. You mean to make scribbling your business?"

"I am," replied our young poet, "anxious to devote my feeble services to the cause of literature."

"A very well turned sentence," said the bookseller: "I don't, myself, dislike a fine phrase now and then; but fine words, like fine clothes, don't do to wear every day: you would soon find yourself without any to wear."

"Very true," thought Maynard, glancing unconsciously at his own threadbare apparel.

"Now, my dear young friend," continued the bookseller, "you seem fond of reason; let me talk a little reason to you. Here, take your pamphlet again: there is good material in it, but it requires the making up. Leave out some of your arguments, and throw in a few sentiments,—something about freeborn Britons and wooden shoes! Englishmen like to have a few sentiments ready for after-dinner use, in case of a speech. You must, also, add a dozen or so sarcasms, and say a little more about bribery and corruption. Above all, be sure that your jokes are obvious ones, and I know the thing will be a hit!"

Walter took up his manuscript with an embarrassed and mortified air. He had written with all the enthusiasm of a patriot of one-and-twenty, who believes, and who hopes; suddenly, his high profession of faith, his earnest appeal to the noblest principles, was changed into a mere question of business. Moreover, in his secret soul he despised the plan proposed; but what could he do? his forlorn garret rose visibly before him, he could not even pay its rent for the coming week. It was the first conflict between the expedient and the ideal. For the first time, a bitter sense of how little consequence his speculative opinions could possibly be, rushed across him, and he held his papers with a hesitating grasp. Curl's quick eye caught the struggle which he yet affected not to notice.

"I must have the pamphlet by the day after to-morrow," said he, as if considering the

affair altogether settled; "and to show you that I have a good hope of its success, here—here are ten guineas for you!" and he counted the money out upon the table.

There was something in the ring of the coin that jarred upon Walter's ear; he was ashamed of being paid,—a false shame, and yet how natural to one both proud and sensitive!

"Time enough," said he, colouring, "to pay me when my work is done!"

"No, no!" interrupted Curl, "it will encourage you as a beginner. If you were an old hand at this sort of work, I could not trust you; you would spend the money, and I should see you and your pamphlets no more; but you young ones are so eager to see yourselves in print!"

"In print!" there was a charm in that phrase that decided Walter. He took up the papers, and assured Curl that he should have sentiment and sarcasm enough by the following night.

"Good Lord!—O, Lord!" cried the astonished publisher: "you are a young hand at your work. Why, you are walking off, and have left your money behind you!"

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

ALTERATION.

My heart hath turn'd aside
From its early dreams;
To me their course has been
Like mountain streams.

Bright and pure they left
Their place of birth;
Soon on every wave
Came taints of earth.

Weeds grew upon the banks,
And, as the waters swept,
A bad or useless part
Of all they kept.

Till it reach'd the plain below,
An alter'd thing
Bearing gloomy trace—
Of its wandering.

WALTER again pursued his way, lost in a very mixed reverie; sometimes writhing under an idea of degradation, in thus making a trade of his talents; and then, again, somewhat consoled by the pride of art; for how many felicitous and stinging epigrams arose in his mind! "It is," thought he, "a political warfare that I am carrying on, and ridicule is as good a weapon as any other."

Lost in meditated satire, he arrived at the shop of Mr. Lintot. It was larger, cleaner, and lighter, than the one that he had just left, and a strong smell of roast meat came from the regions below. He was not kept waiting an instant: "Mr. Lintot is expecting you," said the shopboy, who looked just fresh from the country; and he was shown into his room. It was wonderfully airy for that part of town; and two nicely clean windows, with flower-pots on the sill, looked into a garden: at one of these was seated Mr. Lintot. Like all

cockneys, he had rural tastes; and he always intended, when he had made a certain sum, that he would buy a small farm, and live in the country. He never, however, even to himself specified what the sum was to be.

Mr. Lintot was a large, and rather good-looking man—what would be called comfortable looking, in his appearance. He had a large arm chair, and his very substantial raiment did not appear at all likely to inconvenience him by any restraining tightness. He obviously liked being at his ease: as to meaning, his face had as little as a face could positively have. It was not till animated by some discussion, based upon the multiplication table, that you saw how keen and shrewd those large, dull, gray eyes could become. His welcome to his visitor was more than friendly—it was paternal: he shook him by both hands, and asked so anxiously how the air of London agreed with him.

"Terrible fog, sir!—terrible fog! You did not write your pastoral poems here? Very pretty they are: I wish everybody had my taste for green fields and sheep, poetry would sell then!"

"One portion of my volume, at all events, finds favour with you?" said Walter, very much encouraged by his reception.

"The whole, sir—the whole! It is a charming volume: the love verses, too,—pity that people don't care about love; nobody's in love now-a-days!"

"But what do you say to the satires?" asked the author, not quite so elated.

"Dangerous things, sir—dangerous things!" exclaimed Mr. Lintot, drawing a deep breath of air from the open window: "do you know, sir, Curl published a lampoon on Lord Hervey the other day, who said that he would have horsewhipped him if he could have found his way into the city. Only think, sir, of horsewhipping a publisher!" and Mr. Lintot grew pale with excess of horror.

"To think of only horsewhipping one," muttered Walter to himself; and then added aloud, "but there is nothing personal in my satire."

"So much the worse!" exclaimed Mr. Lintot: "what is the use of denouncing a vice?—denounce the individual! What woman thanks you for a compliment addressed to the sex in general? No, no, pay one to herself! And the same with sneers; always take care that your sneer suits some well-known individual; all his friends will have such pleasure in applying it; and you know, sir, our object is to give as much satisfaction as we can to the public."

"And now, do you think," asked Walter, "that the volume I left with you is likely to give satisfaction?"

"It is a charming book—very charming book! and I see that you are a clever young man. You were punctual to your appointment: punctuality is the first of virtues, and a sign of pretty behaviour in a young man. I foresee that you will succeed!"

"But about my volume of poems?" interrupted its author.

"Why, sir, it is hard to say," replied the cautious publisher: "poetry is not worth much at present; indeed, I never heard that it was. Homer begged his bread: you will excuse my little joke!"

"I am to understand, then," replied Maynard, "that it does not suit you?"

"Never draw a hasty conclusion," answered Mr. Lintot; "I mean to do my best for you!"

"Do you mean to publish my poems?" cried Walter.

"Why, you see, sir, the times are bad, and I am no speculator. I have a wife and family, and a man with a wife and family must be just before he is generous. Besides, my two youngest children have just had the hooping-cough, and they must have a little country air: all these things are expensive. I appeal to your feelings, sir, whether you would drive a hard bargain with a man in my situation?"

"I leave it entirely to yourself," replied Maynard, despondingly.

"Sir, I will run the risk of publishing your volume. Paper and printing are terrible things: I wish books could do without them: but I will venture. I heard you highly spoken of yesterday: we will share what profits there are, and your list of subscribers will insure us against loss."

It did far more, by-the-by, to say nothing of Sir Jasper Meredith's secret guarantee.

"And now business being over," said Lintot, "will you dine with me? I am a plain man, only a joint and a pudding, which is just ready: I like to encourage young men in being punctual."

Walter declined the invitation, precisely because he wanted a dinner. He was, also, conscious that he had made a very bad bargain; but how could he chaffer and dispute about things so precious as the contents of those pages which were the very outpourings of his heart? There were recorded dreams glorious with the future, and feelings soft and musical with the past. He fancied Ethel Churchill's soft blue eyes filled with tears, as she turned the haunted leaves of which she had been the inspiration, and he was consoled for every mortification. He walked along those crowded streets alive but to one delicious hope; and amid poverty, labour, and discouragement, still steeped to the lip in poetry.

The fanciful fables of fairy land are but allegories of the young poet's mind when the sweet spell is upon him. Some slight thing calls up the visionary world, and all the outward and actual is for the time forgotten. It is ethereal and lovely; but, like all other fervors, leaving behind weakness and exhaustion. I believe there is nothing that causes so strong a sensation of physical fatigue as the exercise of the imagination. The pulses beat too rapidly; and how cold, how depressed, is the reaction!

CHAPTER XXXIX.

THE FÊTE.

Many were lovely there; but, of that many,
Was one who look'd the loveliest of any—
The youthful countess. On her cheek the dyes
Were crimson with the morning's exercise;
The laugh upon her full red lip yet hung;
And, arrowlike, light words flash'd from her tongue.
She had more loveliness than beauty—hers
Was that enchantment which the heart confers.
A mouth, sweet from its smiles; a large dark eye,
That had o'er all expression mastery,
Laughing the orb, but yet the long lash made
Somewhat of sadness with its twilight shade;
And suiting well the upcast look that seem'd,
At times, as if of melancholy dream'd:
Her cheek was as a rainbow, it so changed
At each emotion o'er its surface ranged—
Her face was full of feeling.

Mrs. Howard's *fête* at Marble Hill more than realized all expectations. The very spring put itself forward to please her; or, rather borrowed a day from summer. The king and queen were in the last extremities of royal condescension. It was enough to make domestic felicity the fashion from one end of the British empire to the other, just to see the august couple walking arm in arm through the gardens; Mrs. Howard a little in advance, pointing out the beauties, and the favourites of the suite close behind. The king was fond of walking; and it is a singular instance of that feminine courage, endurance, how the queen contrived, subject as she was to the gout, to accompany him.

Queen Caroline must have been a very handsome woman; her eyes were still fine, and her smile peculiarly sweet. No one understood the science of temporizing better than she did, or of

"If she rule him, not to show she rules."

Give a strong mind the advantage of habit, and its dominion over the weak one is absolute. It is a strong proof of Sir Robert Walpole's sagacity that he never for a moment mistook the real source of power. Others might court the royal favourite; he saw at once that Mrs. Howard was but the shadow flung, by the queen's own good pleasure, before her. There can be no doubt but that Queen Caroline secretly enjoyed the knowledge of her influence. To a strong-minded woman, shut out from the natural sphere of the affections, what remains but the enjoyment of consciousness of power?

Amid the brilliant crowd, that gathered on the lawns, or loitered through the saloons, no one looked more lovely than Lady Marchmont; and it was obvious, that she enjoyed the homage by which she was surrounded. Tired of seeing one cavalier desert her after another, Lady Mary Wortley Montague joined the gay circle, of which her brilliant rival was the centre. By so doing, it also appeared her own—at least she was where all assembled; none could say that she was deserted.

"What a change!" exclaimed she, glancing round the room—"since Mrs. Howard was obliged to cut off her beautiful hair, and sell

it, in order to pay for her own and her husband's dinner."

"What a dreadful sacrifice!" exclaimed Lady Marchmont, with mock-tragedy air—"Though, as Chloe would say, it was devoted to the noblest duty of humanity."

"It is a pity, Lady Mary, that Pope now 'disdains the shrine he once adored,'" said Lord Harvey, "or what a subject you might suggest to him in the locks of the modern Berenice. But I believe 'Sappho's eye, quick glancing round the park,' has lost its ancient influence."

"I am glad to find," retorted her ladyship, annoyed at his allusion to lines any thing but complimentary, and too well known to need more than allusion,—“I am glad to find that Lord Harvey has, at length, found a virtue to suit him,” retorted Lady Mary; “there is candour, at least, in borrowing from the wit of others, it frankly admits that we have none of our own.”

"It is, then, a virtue," said Lady Marchmont, good-naturedly, "that we are all likely to practise in your presence. But I go a step beyond; I candidly admit, instead of borrowing, I would very gladly steal your wit."

"Ah!" whispered Lord Harvey, "Lady Marchmont is resolved that her very sins should be innocent. Now that she has begun to covet, it is something not worth having."

"Are you talking," interrupted Lady Mary, "of Lord Harvey's head or heart? as I hear you speaking of things not worth having."

At this juncture, their attention was attracted to a lady who passed, finely, rather than richly dressed.

"What a splendid pair of ear-rings!" exclaimed Lady Marchmont.

"Well, really," said Lord Harvey, "Lady S.'s conduct is too audacious. Why, every body knows those ear-rings were given her by that man for whom she procured the place in the custom-house, through the queen's interest."

"Well," replied Lady Mary, "who is to know where good wine is sold, unless you hang out the bush?"

The announcement that the banqueting-room was thrown open, occasioned a general rush. Lady Marchmont had not yet attained that elegant audacity which forces its way through trains, ruffles, elbows, &c.; and, with the exception of Lord Harvey, who was handing her forward, she completely lost her party. Her attention was engrossed by a young female, who, only accompanied by an elderly gentleman, was quite incapable of either advancing, or even extricating herself from the crowd. Henrietta saw at once that the youthful stranger was unaccustomed to such a scene, and that she was even more embarrassed than fatigued. They were so close that they touched each other, till the lady leant for support against Lady Marchmont. It was but for a moment; and, recovering herself, she apologized in a voice so sweet, and so timid, that Henrietta felt a sudden and voluntary in-

terest,—one of those attractions for which we can as little account as we can resist. She drew the arm of the trembling girl within her own, and said,—“Suppose we try and make way to the window, we can sit there; and I dare say that you care as little for the banquet as I do.”

They easily reached the window, to the no small joy of the elderly gentleman, who, now that he was rid of his troublesome charge, thought that he himself could reach the royal presence; and to lose his chance of a smile from the king or queen was a dreadful thing. Lord Harvey, after seeing them securely seated, volunteered his services in procuring some sort of refreshment, so that Lady Marchmont was left alone with her new acquaintance. She was scarcely pretty, but looked so young, so delicate, and the soft colour came and went in her cheek with such sweet shyness, that Henrietta found herself every moment more and more interested. At first she had great difficulty in bringing about a conversation, the stranger was ignorant of the topics of the day, and very timid. But Lady Marchmont had a fascination about her it was impossible to resist, and they soon began talking with both ease and pleasure. Suddenly the stranger broke off abruptly in what she was saying, her eyes grew almost brilliant with delight, and a rich crimson animated her whole countenance.

“There is my husband!” exclaimed she, in a voice trembling with emotion.

Lady Marchmont was astonished that one so young and so shy, should be married; but she was still more astonished when she saw her husband—it was Norbourne Courtenaye.

CHAPTER XL.

THE FIRST DOUBT.

Youth, love, and rank, and wealth—all these combined,
Can these be wretched? Mystery of the mind,
Whose happiness is in itself; but still
Has not that happiness at its own will.
She felt too wretched with the sudden fear—
Had she such lovely rival, and so near?
Ay, bitterness of the bitter this worst pain,
To know love's offering has been in vain;
Rejected, scorn'd, and trampled under foot,
Its bloom and leaves destroy'd, but not its root.
“He loves me not!”—no other words nor sound
An echo in the lady's bosom found:
It was wretchedness too great to bear,
She sank before the presence of despair!

MR. COURTENAYE was accompanied by his uncle, whom business had detained till this late hour in town. Henrietta knew and liked Lord Norbourne, but now she had only just sufficient self-control to receive his greeting with due politeness. Mrs. Courtenaye having no feeling but that of gratitude for Henrietta's kindness, was eager to express it.

“I am so glad you know her!” whispered she to her father: “do thank her for me.”

“My little rustic,” said Lord Norbourne, “is most fortunate. Will Lady Marchmont allow her the honour of a farther acquaintance? Permit me to present my daughter, Mrs. Courtenaye.”

“And my husband,” said Constance timidly.

“I have already the honour of Mr. Courtenaye's acquaintance,” replied Lady Marchmont, with a coldness that she did not even attempt to conceal; for the image of Ethel—pale, sad, and wasting her youth in unavailing regret—arose too distinctly before her; and if it was present to her, how forcibly did she not recall it to Norbourne Courtenaye.

Ethel, his still too much beloved Ethel, seemed actually present. What, at that moment, were her feelings? Did she hate, did she despise him? Was she—but that he shuddered to contemplate!—was she unhappy? How he longed to asked Lady Marchmont about her: though deeply mortified at the cold manner in which she received him, it showed plainly enough what was her opinion of his conduct. Lord Norbourne saw that there was something wrong, though even his penetration was at a loss to divine what; and he therefore, exerted himself to talk it away. In this he was seconded by Lady Marchmont; and between them, the conversation was sufficiently sustained.

Constance, encouraged by the presence of her father and husband, and shut out from the crowd, felt less timid than usual: still she could not but perceive that Norbourne's manner lacked its ordinary grace in speaking to her new friend; and yet she had never felt so anxious that he should please. Taking her earliest opportunity, she whispered,

“Only think, Norbourne, of your knowing Lady Marchmont! do talk to her; she is so kind, so charming.”

But her words fell on unheeded ears. Courtenaye's thoughts were far away; and Constance, shrinking into herself at the least repulse, did not attempt to speak to him again.

There is nothing in this world so sensitive as affection. It feels its own happiness too much not to tremble for its reality; and starts, ever and anon, from its own delicious consciousness, to ask, Is it not, indeed, a dream? A word and a look are enough either to repress or to encourage. Nothing is a trifle in love, for all is seen through an exaggerated medium; and Constance's attachment to her husband was of the most imaginative order—shy, fearful, little demonstrative, but how utterly devoted! It never came into her head to blame Norbourne for any thing. She did not even venture on making excuses for him: all he did appeared best, and most natural to do. She took it for granted that he was pre-occupied; and, after a moment or two of disappointment, she resumed her own peculiarly sweet and pleading smile, a smile that seemed to implore your kindness. Indeed, almost her whole attention was soon engrossed by her brilliant companion, whose circle was increased by some three or four friends, who had but just discovered her. Till then she had never formed an idea of one so gifted and so charming. She listened with astonishment to her companion's gay sallies, and answers, as

piquant as they were ready. She was astonished that any one could talk so easily to her father, that father to whom she never spoke without awe; and gazed, with enthusiastic admiration, on the beautiful face, which gave every word and smile such a charm. Such is the power of novelty, that Lady Marchmont was more flattered at the impression she produced on the unpractised stranger, than with all the homage of the courtly train that followed her.

Constance felt too pleased and too much excited for her usual silence; and she took the opportunity of the first pause in conversation to whisper to Lady Marchmont,—“How happy Norbourne is to have the pleasure of knowing you! Has he known you long? I wonder that he never talked about you!”

“Happy!” replied Henrietta, with a sneer, a little more marked than she meant it to be. “I knew him before his marriage in the country.” Then, turning to Lord Norbourne, added,—“It is odd how much older one grows in London than anywhere else. I was going to have said, years ago.”

It is a strange thing, the instinct of jealousy in a woman; a sudden light seemed to burst in upon Constance. Lady Marchmont’s coldness, Norbourne’s embarrassment and coldness, led alike to one terrible conclusion. They had met before his marriage; and surely to meet Lady Marchmont must have been to love her. A mist gathered over her eyes: she felt cold and giddy. Scarcely conscious, she strove to reach her father, and fainted away in his arms!

Poor Constance was carried to a room in the house; and, when, at length, she recovered, she was glad to accede to her husband’s wish of leaving the *fête*. Norbourne was almost thankful for any excuse that enabled him to avoid seeing Lady Marchmont. In vain he sought to rally his spirits, and to conceal his depression; but the idea of Ethel mocked his efforts to forget. He remembered her solitary life, and with what delight he had once thought on her first introduction into society. Now he was joining in all its gayeties, and where was she? Still in the same seclusion, with nothing to disturb one sad remembrance: she was lonely; he dared not add, even to himself, wretched.

CHAPTER XLI.

GAYETIES AND ABSURDITIES.

LADY MARCHMONT TO SIR JASPER MEREDITH.

What Shakespeare said of lovers, might apply
To all the world—“’Tis well they do not see
The pretty follies that themselves commit.”
Could we but turn upon ourselves the eyes
With which we look on others, life would pass
In one perpetual blush and smile.
The smile, how bitter!—for ’tis scorn’s worst task
To scorn ourselves; and yet we could not choose
But mock our actions, all we say or do,
If we but saw them as we others see.
Life’s best repose is blindness to itself.

MY DEAREST UNCLE,—So, at last, I have met poor Ethel’s rival; and, as is always the
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case when one forms an idea to one’s self, she is as different as possible from what I anticipated. Pale, and delicate almost to prettiness, she is timid to a painful degree; and very much in love with her husband.

Mr. Courtenaye’s embarrassment, on meeting me, was too much to conceal. Ethel was plainly in his thoughts; and, if it be any consolation to her, he looks very much altered and depressed. I suppose the family estate must have been heavily burdened; and, between pride and poverty, love quitted the field, banished, if not subdued. I have seen him once or twice since, either in low or highly excited spirits. I have not met Mrs. Courtenaye again; for, twice that I called, she was too ill to see me, and she appears in public but little, owing to her health.

We go next week on a visit to Cliveden, so that I am not likely to see any thing more of them for some time; and yet I cannot help being interested in her. On my return, my first visit shall be to her.

Lady Orkney’s history, to whose house we are going, is a curious one. As Miss Elizabeth Villiers, by her charms she pierced the cuirass that enveloped the well-disciplined heart of William III. But the conquest over his affection was not half so extraordinary as the conquest over his economy: he actually conferred upon her all the private estates in Ireland of his father-in-law, King James, worth some five-and-twenty thousand a year. This magnificent donation had, however, a most curious drawback. Out of the proceeds were to be paid two annuities; one to Lady Susan Bellasye, and one to Mrs. Godfrey, both mistresses to the former monarch. It seems to me a most practical piece of sarcasm. However, parliament interfered, and an act passed, resuming all grants since the revolution. Her royal and careful lover nevertheless found some other substantial method of showing his favour; for the lady was very rich when she married Lord George Hamilton, afterwards created Earl of Orkney.

I must say, that, at the coronation, there was little vestige left as possible “of the charms that pleased a king.” “She looked,” Lady Mary Wortley said, “like an Egyptian mummy, wrought with hieroglyphics of gold.” Lady Orkney has the reputation of being very clever: I do not see much proof in a letter that she wrote to Mrs. Howard, on the occasion of the late *fête* at Clifden. It began thus:—“Madame, I give you this trouble out of the anguish of my mind.” This anguish consists in some stools being placed instead of chairs, and Lord Grantham’s directing that there should be two tablecloths instead of one; “which innovation,” as she pathetically observes, “turned all the servants’ heads.” Moreover, “they kept back the dinner too long for her majesty after it was dished, and it was set before the fire.” She winds up by saying,—“I thought I had turned my mind in a philosophical way of having done with the world; but I find I have deceived myself.” Poor Lady Orkney! it is just what we all do

However, I confess, the *fête* appeared to me most splendid; and the royal guests as much pleased as the rest of the company.

The last *jeu d'esprit* circulating among us, is "A Characteristic Catalogue of Pictures." Characteristic enough some of them certainly are! for Mr. Onslow has contributed "A Flower-Piece;" and if ever man talked poppies and tulips, it is our worthy and flowery speaker. "A Head Unfinished" is by Lord Townshend, of whom his colleague said, "that his brains wanted nothing but ballast!" Mr. Booth obliges us with "A Mist." He ought to be able to paint it most accurately, for he always seems in one."

Next week we go to Lord Burlington, a nobleman to whose taste for building the world is indebted for one of its chief pleasures; namely, that of finding fault. Two noble friends dined with him in his new house in Piccadilly, and next day circulated the following epigram:—

"Possess'd of one great hall for state,
Without a room to sleep or eat;
How well you build, let flattery tell,
And all the world how ill you dwell."

We, however, are going to the villa at Chiswick, of which Dr. Arbuthnot says, that "it is fitted up with a cold in every corner, and a consumption by way of perspective." Lord Harvey's remark is, that "it is too small to live in, and too large to hang to one's watch!"

I must leave off abruptly, for I hear the carriage announced; and Lord Marchmont as much objects to being kept waiting as if his time were of the least value.

Ever your most affectionate child,

HENRIETTA.

CHAPTER XLII.

AN ALLUSION TO THE PAST.

Ah! there are memories that will not vanish;
Thoughts of the past we have no power to banish;
To show the heart how powerless mere will.
For we may suffer, and yet struggle still.
It is not at our choice that we forget,
That is a power no science teaches yet:
The heart may be a dark and closed up tomb;
But memory stands a ghost amid the gloom!

"I AM sorry," said Lord Norbourne, "that your protégé, Walter Maynard, should be, what I suppose he would call, so patriotic. Young men think it such an easy thing to set the world to rights. Why do you not talk him into more rational notions?"

"Truly, my dear uncle," replied Courtenaye, "it is no such easy matter reasoning with one at once firm and enthusiastic in his opinions."

"Well, well!" replied his uncle, drawing his arm-chair closer to the hearth, and stirring the fire into a cheerful blaze. "Time does work wonderful changes, and in nothing so much as in opinion. In youth we encore the sentiment,

O, bless my country, Heaven! he said and died;"

but, as we advance in life, we think,

"How weak it is to pity Cato's case,
Who might have lived, and had a handsome place!"

"Your views of human nature are any thing but encouraging," exclaimed Norbourne.

"I have heard much," returned his companion, "of the beauty of truth; but it is a beauty no one likes to look upon. To find it out, is only to find that you have been duped in every possible manner; and to hear it, is only to have a friend give way to his temper, and say something disagreeable to you."

"But what," asked Courtenaye, "is to become of us, when the freshness of pleasure is gone with the freshness of youth, and one illusion has faded after another?"

"Why," replied Lord Norbourne, "there remain avarice and business. I exceedingly regret that I do not, cannot force myself to love money. It is the most secure source of enjoyment of which our nature is capable. It is tangible and present; it is subject to no imaginary miseries; it goes on increasing; it is a joy forever. It exercises both bodily and mental faculties in its acquisition; it is satisfaction to the past, and encouragement to the future."

"For mercy's sake, stop!" cried Norbourne; "if you go on much further with this eulogium, you will send me away a confirmed miser."

"No such good luck," replied Lord Norbourne, smiling; "the miser, like the poet, must be born. It is not to be acquired without an original vocation. In the mean time, I advise you to amuse yourself as much as you can; and, talking of amusement, do you go to Lady Marchmont's to-night?"

Courtenaye started at the name; and was too much absorbed in all it called up, to notice that his uncle's quick, dark eye was fixed on his face, with a glance that seemed desirous of reading his inmost thoughts.

"No," said he, "Constance did not seem well enough to go out; and, as I am not wanted, I mean to keep my promise with Walter Maynard, and accompany him to witness the fate of his new play, which comes out to-night."

"Constance has not been well," observed her father, "since the *fête* at Marble Hill: we must not let her go into scenes of such fatigue."

"And yet," said Norbourne, "it is a dull life she often leads. Why, my dear uncle, when I come home late I always find her up in the library, copying your letters—an example, I am sure, to your other secretaries."

"Constance is a creature only fitted to live in the quiet sphere of the affections. She is happier at home than in the midst of gayety, which is too much for her: but her recent indisposition seems to me rather in the mind."

The open and anxious manner in which Norbourne looked up, was sufficient answer; but having made the allusion, his uncle felt he was bound to proceed.

"I know I may speak to you, my dear child, with perfect confidence; but I see clearly that Constance is suffering from an undefined jealousy of Lady Marchmont."

"Lady Marchmont!" exclaimed his nephew, with the most unfeigned surprise.

"Why, coupling your previous acquaintance with your obvious embarrassment at meeting, can you wonder that Constance should fear the renewed influence of one so beautiful, and so fascinating? All I know of Lady Marchmont is charming; but she likes admiration—who does not? and pique is an absolute passion with a woman. She may like to charm a truant lover, were it but to show him what he has lost."

"My dear uncle," replied Norbourne, after a pause of mingled embarrassment and emotion, "you are completely mistaken. I will tell you the whole truth, and then let the subject be dropped forever. I was making a summer tour through our country last year, and called on a Mrs. Churchill, an old friend, and distant connexion of our family. I was received with great hospitality; and, liking the neighbourhood, accepted her invitation for a more lengthened visit. I soon lingered there from another motive. I became attached to her granddaughter; and Lady Marchmont, just then married, was the intimate friend of Miss Churchill, and was aware of my affection even before its object. I left, bound by no engagement, as I wished to consult my mother. Lady Marchmont considers my conduct most unjust, what, alas! it was to Ethel—Miss Churchill, I mean—and resents it for her friend's sake. I have made no inquiries—I never shall. The very sorrow I may have inflicted on one woman, will make me doubly anxious to guard it from another. The happiness of Constance is to me the most sacred thing in the world. What, in this case, would you advise me to do?"

Lord Norbourne was silent, for he was touched to the heart: at last his voice became sufficiently steady to reply. "To do nothing; leave it to Constance's own good sense to discover how groundless are her apprehensions. No good ever comes of speaking on such a subject. A woman always exaggerates to herself as she talks. Silence is the first step to forgetfulness. One word about Mrs. Churchill: I know that her name is down in Sir Robert's list of confirmed Jacobites. There is a suspicion of a correspondence carried on by her means with the Court of St. Germain's. Whatever happens, she shall find a friend in me. Let me give you the satisfaction of contributing to her security."

Norbourne pressed his uncle's hand, and they parted in silence. The latter remained for a few minutes lost in thought.

"I did it for the best," exclaimed he, half aloud; and, after all, what is love? I only hope that making an attachment an unhappy one, will not turn out the only receipt for securing its continuance."

He then drew towards the table, and was

soon completely absorbed in the perusal of a memorial.

After all, there is nothing like business for enabling us to get through our weary existence. The intellect cannot sustain its sunshine flight long; the flagging wing drops to the earth. Pleasure palls, and idleness is

"Many gather'd miseries in one name;"

but business gets over the hours without counting them. It may be very tired at the end, still it has brought the day to a close sooner than any thing else.

CHAPTER XLIII.

DOUBTS.

Ask me not, love, what may be in my heart
When, gazing on thee, sudden teardrops start;
When only joy should come where'er thou art.

The human heart is compass'd with fears;
And joy is tremulous, for it enspheres
An earth-born star, which melts away in tears.

I am too happy for a careless mirth—
Hence anxious thoughts, and sorrowful, have birth;
Who looks from heaven, is half return'd to earth.

How powerless is my fond anxiety!
I feel I could lay down my life for thee,
Yet feel how vain such sacrifice might be.

Hence do I tremble in my happiness;
Hurried and dim the unknown hours press:
I question of a past I dare not guess.

LORD NORBOURNE was right in supposing that the illness of his daughter arose from the mind, or rather from the heart. If any thing, she exaggerated her own deficiencies; the very intensity of her affection for her husband made her feel as if he deserved even her ideal of perfection. Her introduction into the world had brought its usual bitter fruit—experience. With all the simplicity of seclusion, and a neglected education, Constance had natural talents, and that fine sense which originates in fine feeling. She shrank from talking herself; but she listened with an attention the more keen, as it was undisturbed by most of the usual distractions. Chiefly accustomed to the society of her father and her husband, her mind, unconsciously, both to herself and to them, was every day acquiring new powers, only restrained by her naturally timid temper.

But was she happier for her knowledge? Alas, no! she learnt to doubt and fear. The sneers she now so often heard pointed at others, she took for granted would, also, not spare herself; and what effect might they not have on Norbourne? She had overheard more than one cruel sarcasm on her personal appearance; she heard beauty so vaunted, that it appeared to her necessary to love.

Her delicate frame was utterly incapable of supporting the fatigue and late hours of the society in which she so suddenly found herself placed; and the exertion to please, and to appear pleased, produced that usual reaction which is so oppressive to the spirits. She

had no female friend or relative in whom she could confide; and the greater portion of her time was necessarily passed alone. To catch the last sound of Norbourne's footstep; to spring forward delighted on his return; to watch his every look, and treasure every word; to surround him with a thousand tender cares which have only existence in feminine solicitude—so was her whole existence employed. She would have made any sacrifice to gratify even his slightest wish; or, rather, she would not have made any: for, nothing to her could have appeared a sacrifice, if for him.

Her husband was not—could any man be?—insensible to a devotion so meek and so entire. To hear her express a wish, and to gratify it, was the same thing. His kindness was almost womanly in its anxiety and delicacy; he gave up amusements and engagements, to sit, evening after evening, by her languid couch: but one thing was wanting—love alone can answer love; and, kind as he was, attentive as he was, the seeking heart of Constance pined with a perpetual want.

Her meeting with Lady Marchmont gave a sudden clue to an unhappiness, I should rather say a want of happiness, unacknowledged even to herself. A terrible fear, which, the more she thought it over, grew more like truth, took possession of her mind. Courtenaye had loved the brilliant stranger whom he now met with such obvious reluctance. What could have separated them? To Constance it appeared impossible that Courtenaye could ever have been rejected; but, whatever the cause had been, to her it mattered not: she looked only to the hopelessness of ever inspiring love in one who had loved Lady Marchmont. She tortured herself by recalling every word and look of her too gifted rival; she remembered her as she sat in the window-seat, gleams of sunshine reflected on her glossy, black hair, black with that glancing purple bloom as it is only seen elsewhere in nature on the neck of the raven. The bright face, yet brighter with animation—Constance remembered its effect on herself, as well as the circle of which the lovely countess was the idol. She hid her face on her arm, as if by so doing she could shut out the image which pursued her. Just then Norbourne entered the chamber; and, fancying from her attitude that his wife was asleep, he approached softly, and drew a large shawl around her. This little act completely overcame Constance; the tears rushed into her eyes, and, rising up, she hastily leant her head on his shoulder to conceal them.

"You must not sit up for me to-night," said he, "for I shall be late; and, dearest, you are not strong enough for our London hours."

There was that in this little speech that curdled the blood at her heart.

"Lady Marchmont's dinners are very gay, I believe?" replied she, in a low and constrained voice.

"So I hear," answered Courtenaye; "but, *as you are not well enough to go, I do not feel*

bound to go either. My engagement is at the Haymarket theatre, to witness the fate of a new play by Walter Maynard, whose poems we have so often read together."

"O, how I hope it will succeed!" exclaimed she; her sudden feeling of relief giving unusual energy to her words.

"I hope so, indeed!" replied her husband: "but now, Constance, be a good child, and go to bed; for, I forewarn you, I will tell you nothing about it till to-morrow, at the hour."

*'When lapdogs give themselves the rousing shake,
And sleepless lovers just at twelve awake.'*

He then left her, and Constance held her breath to catch the last sound of his receding steps.

"He is, at least, not gone to Lady Marchmont's," murmured she; but, a moment after, she reproached herself for her joy. What! could she wish him to give up an amusement? Perhaps he had seen her dislike, and had yielded to it: she could not bear to think that he had made the least sacrifice to her. She rose from her seat, and began to pace the room with hurried and agitated steps; suddenly she stopped, and earnestly contemplated a picture of her husband, that hung opposite.

"How handsome he is!" exclaimed she, despondingly "how well he looks his noble and ancient race!"

She then turned to a mirror beside, and gazed on her own countenance: she could not see its sweet expression, she only saw features contracted with anxiety, a cheek pale as death, and eyes filled with tears. The contrast was too painful; and, sinking back on the couch, gave way to a passionate burst of tears. Again she rose, but it was to drop on her knees, her hands clasped in earnest prayer.

"My God," she whispered, "I am but what thou hast willed I should be! Forgive the sorrow that questions of thy righteous pleasure; forgive the human and sinful nature that murmurs when it should submit: let me not be punished in him. Father of mercies! pardon the prayer that asks, how humbly, how fervently, for his—for my husband's happiness!"

CHAPTER XLIV.

A FIRST NIGHT.

*It is a fearful stake the poet casts,
When he comes forth from his sweet solitude
Of hopes, and songs, and visionary things,
To ask the iron verdict of the world.
Till then his home has been in fairyland,
Shelter'd in the sweet depths of his own heart;
But the strong need of praise impels him forth;
For never was there poet but he craved
The golden sunshine of secure renown.
That sympathy which is the life of fame,
It is full dearly bought: henceforth he lives
Feverish and anxious, in an unkind world,
That only gives the laurel to the grave.*

NORBOURNE was glad when he found himself in the open air, and with an object before him in which he was keenly interested. It is the mind ill at ease that seeks for excitement,

nd Courtenaye found in himself a craving or any amusement that, even for a short time, carried him away from the bitter and busy world within. But now he had a better motive than the mere desire of amusement—he was most anxious for Maynard's success. One of the first things he had done in London, was to find Walter—not a very easy task. Walter shrank from his society with the sensitiveness that belongs to pride and poverty. But Courtenaye would not allow his advances to be rejected; he interested himself in the other's pursuits, and foresaw their future fame. No poet could reject a friend who was also a prophet, and of his own success.

Norbourne was punctual to his appointment; but Maynard was there before him. He found him pacing the little sanded parlour of the room appointed for the place of meeting, with regular and hasty steps: his slight frame quivered with uncontrollable emotion, and his face was absolutely white with agitation. He took Norbourne's hand in silence, and they had walked the length of several streets before he found voice to thank him for coming. When he arrived at the door of the theatre he made a pause, and then, reminding his companion of his promise to join him, he ran in as if life and death were on his speed. Norbourne went round to the front of the house, where every thing promised well. There was brilliant audience—rank, beauty, and wit—while he went from box to box, doing his utmost to predispose his listeners in the author's favour. As he looked round the house, he could not but feel that the triumph was well worth the risk: the mastery over human emotion had never before appeared to him so glorious. In another hour the hopes and the recollections, the thoughts and the feelings, the most generous aspirations and the tenderest sympathies of our nature, would be stirred, and by what? The noble creation of one gifted and inspired mind!

The overture was almost at a close; and silence being now more effective than any thing that he could urge in favour of the play, Courtenaye went behind the scenes: never had the contrast struck him so forcibly. Before the curtain all was light and brilliancy; beautiful faces appeared with every advantage of dress and situation; placed at their side was the graceful and perfumed cavalier, with flatteries as light as the wave of the fan, that half chided, half encouraged them. Scattered amid the glittering crowd were men whose empire was that at which the youthful author aimed—the empire of the mind. All before the curtain was poetry in its most brilliant, and yet most tangible shape; but behind came the reality—cold, dark, and forbidding. Norbourne felt his enthusiasm suddenly extinguished; he looked with absolute loathing on the scene around him; so gloomy, and yet so common. Actors and actresses appeared alike exaggerated and tawdry, and he marvelled what could be the attraction of an existence which seemed divested as much of comfort as of dignity.

Just as these thoughts were passing before him, his attention was drawn to Booth, who, to solve a trifling disagreement between him and the author as to the effect which was to be given to a particular passage, began to declaim the speech in question. Courtenaye was at once carried out of himself; he caught the fire of the actor; the splendid voice, the noble gesture, the exalted sentiment, aided by the pomp of the verse, mastered his inmost soul. He was again under the influence of genius,—that influence so subtle and so intense, conquering alike time, place, and circumstance.

He was next struck by the alteration in Walter. His cheek was flushed crimson, his eyes flashed, and he seemed in the wildest spirits; for every actor he had his jest, and for every actress his compliment. He scarcely appeared to heed what was doing on the stage; perhaps Norbourne was the only one who noticed the convulsive movement of the bitten lip, or the slight shudder which shook him at any unexpected sound. As to Norbourne himself, he tried in vain to speak; leant against one of the side scenes; all he could do was to watch intently the progress, till he almost felt inclined to spring forward and implore the audience to admire. To him it seemed the most dreadful ordeal to which the human mind could be subjected: all its most precious thoughts brought forward for public scrutiny, perhaps to be misjudged and ridiculed; the labour of months, the hope of a life, to be the sacrifice of a single night; and even he knew not the extent of to-night's importance to the author.

Walter Maynard's fortunes wholly depended on the success of his play. Lintot refused to bring out his poems till the fate of the tragedy was decided; and he well knew that if it failed, the cautious bookseller would decline the publication altogether. A few shillings were all he possessed in the world; and yet there he stood, the light word on his lip, and seemingly far less anxious than his friend. The subject of his play was the fate of Agis, the young and heroic King of Sparta: it gave the ideal of patriotism, relieved by the tenderness of sorrow, and the fidelity of love. It is curious to note how much an author throws himself into his creations: there are his passions, his feelings, and his thoughts. He only models his hero by imagining what himself would do in a similar situation. Agis was Walter Maynard; brave, high-minded, devoted, and full of the noblest plans for his country and his kind; and yet with a certain vein of irresolution growing out of theories too fine for reducing into practice. But, in considering an author and his works as one, a sufficient distinction is not drawn between the ideal and the real: the last is only given by being past through the crucible of the first. He does not give the events of his life; but the deductions that have been drawn from those events. It is not that he has been placed in the circumstances that he paints; but a quick intuition born of quick feeling.

and that power of observation, which is the first requisite in a poet, enable him to bestow actual life to his breathing pictures: while this life is necessarily coloured by the sentiments and the emotions of the giver.

Every thing now depended on the death of Agis, whether it would take due hold on the sympathies of the audience. Courtenaye augured well from the profound silence; suddenly a burst of applause shook the house, the curtain had fallen, and Booth sprang to Walter's side, who was still engaged in an animated flirtation with an actress who was to play in the afterpiece. "We have carried every thing before us!" exclaimed he: "I died in splendid style. And now, for supper; I will drink to the liberties of Sparta in nothing less than champagne to-night! I have done wonders for you: I am sure that no one who saw Agis to-night could say that 'Sparta has many a worthier son than he!' I was first-rate!"

"I congratulate you!" was what Courtenaye, as he shook hands with the successful author, tried to say; but he felt that his words were inaudible. At first he could only look his joy; but he was singularly struck with Walter's appearance: the flush of forced spirits had sunk in the presence of his great emotion, and his face was as the face of death.

A dark presentiment sprang up in Norbourne's mind, and a sad pity mingled with his rejoicing. He seemed fascinated by the large lustrous eyes, whose light was not of this world—so unearthly, so wild, was at that moment the expression of Walter's countenance. "He is dying!" sounded like a voice in Norbourne's ears: he tried to shake off what he termed a vain and foolish fear, but it clung to him like an omen. He looked again, and the colour had returned to Maynard's lips, the shadow of the grave had passed away; but Courtenaye still seemed to hear within himself a solemn and fated voice repeat, "He is dying!"

CHAPTER XLV.

SUCCESS.

All things are symbols; and we find
In morning's lovely prime,
The actual history of the mind
In its own early time:
So, to the youthful poet's gaze,
A thousand colours rise,
The beautiful which soon decays,
The buoyant which soon dies.

So does not die their influence,
The spirit owns the spell;
Memory to him is music—hence
The magic of his shell.
He sings of general hopes and fears—
A universal tone;
All weep with him, for in his tears
They recognise their own.

Yet many a one, whose lute hangs now
High on the laurel tree,
Feels that the cypress' dark bough
A sifter meed would be:
And still with weariness and wo
The fatal gift is won;
Many a radiant head lies low,
Ere half its race be run.

THE group of Maynard's friends that gathered round him, only waited till Booth had

changed his dress to adjourn to a neighbouring tavern for supper. The excitement needed wine and mirth to carry it off. Suppers were the *ne plus ultra* of human invention; it could go no further, and was obliged to degenerate; dinner is too much matter of business, it is a necessity: now, a necessity is too like a duty ever to be pleasant. Besides, it divides the day instead of winding it up. I do not think, moreover, that people were ever meant to enjoy themselves in the daytime. Day belongs to the earthlier deities—the stern, the harsh, and the cold. Gnomes are the spirits of daily hours. Toil, thought, and strife, beset us: we have to work, to quarrel, and to struggle: we have to take our neighbours in; or, at least, to avoid their doing so by us. We are false, designing, and cautious; for, after all, the doom of Ishmael is the doom of the whole race of men. His hand against every one, and every one's hand against him. Talk of general benevolence and philanthropy—nonsense! We all in our hearts hate each other; and good cause have we for so doing. But night comes in with a more genial spirit: we have done our worst and our bitterest; and we need a small space to indulge any little bit of cordiality that may be left in us. A thousand gay phantasms float in on the sunny south, which has left the far-off vineyards of its birth. The taverns of our ancestors would ill bear contrasting with the clubs of to-day; but many a gay midnight was past in the former:—midnights, whose mirth has descended even to us; half the jests, whose gayety is still contagious; half the epigrams, whose point is yet felt, were born of those brief and brilliant hours. Such a supper, and such a party, were now waiting to adjourn to a tavern near the theatre.

While they loitered till Booth doffed his theatrical costume, Norbourne's attention was attracted by the young actress to whom Maynard had been talking; she was looking earnestly at him, and he felt sure that he had seen her face before. Catching his eye, she smiled; and, approaching him, said,—

"So, Mr. Norbourne does not choose to remember an old friend."

He started, for the voice was as familiar as the face.

"Lavinia Fenton!" exclaimed he,—"impossible!"

"Not at all impossible," replied the girl; "you know I never liked the country. I had a soul above plaiting cap borders, and picking out false stitches in my lady's embroidery; so, finding that there was no chance of coming to London—you false-hearted man!—with you and my young lady, in a coach and four, I tried if a cart would not do as well."

There was something in this abrupt allusion to the treasured and hidden past, that at once shocked and silenced Norbourne. He was annoyed to find that his heart's sweetest secret was in the possession of one so little likely to keep it; and who, from the very position in which he found her, would, probably, only consider it as matter for a coarse jest.

"How, in the name of all that is wonderful, o I find you here?" asked he, less from my curiosity, than feeling it a necessity to say something.

"Why, luck's all in this world," replied he. "A company of strolling players asked leave to play in our barn; I learnt more of the world in a week than I had in all my life before. At the week's end the barn was vacant, and my place also. The Romeo of the company told me that I had the finest eyes in the world. I had myself long suspected the fact; and, after thinking Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, I set off on the Monday to see what they would do for me here; and, I must say, they have done their duty. At present I have only a soubrette's part, with an apron and pockets, and a ballad; but, as I said before, luck's all in this world, and I have every requisite for being lucky. I have a handsome voice, a good voice, I care for nothing and nobody; and when I am a dutchess, which I have quite set my mind on being, I will be very grateful to you for having patronised my first benefit, which I shall rely upon your doing."

Half of this voluble discourse was lost upon Norbourne; it seemed as if, within the last few days, he was fated to be haunted by the name of Ethel Churchill: he could not resist making an inquiry. He glanced around, no one was attending; and, in a hurried and agitated tone, he whispered,—"For God's sake, do tell me something of Ethel—Miss Churchill, I mean?"

The girl looked at him earnestly and gravely,—even reproachfully; but there was something in the true emotion of his manner that apparently touched her.

"Mr. Courtenaye," answered she, in a voice even more guarded than his own, "I can tell you nothing that will, that ought to give you any satisfaction. It is a miserable vanity which delights in the affection it only sought to betray. I know how you sought to win that of my young mistress. Heaven is my witness, that I would not have left her could my stay have been either benefit or comfort. But Ethel Churchill's is no temper to soothe itself with words. She suffers in silence; and light and darkness are not more opposed than our natures,—there never was sympathy between us; but I do pity her. You would scarcely know her again, she is so altered; there she mopes about the house, she who used to be the life of us all. When with her grandmother, she does try and get up her spirits a little; but when out of her sight, she will sit, and not speak a word for hours. This, Mr. Courtenaye, is your doing."

The loud ringing of the prompter's bell made her spring suddenly away; and two of his companions, each taking an arm, hurried him away also. How glad would he have been to have left the party: his thoughts were in a tumult; duties and inclinations warred together—nay, his very sense of right was confounded. To see Ethel once more, to kneel at her feet, to accuse himself, and to implore

her pardon, mingled indistinctly in his resolves. The scene before him seemed strangely confused; he heard nothing of what was going on, he was either silent, or his answers were wide of the mark. All at once his mood changed: he sought in his champagne glass for forgetfulness,—for that he was too excited; but it brought a wild and desperate gaiety,—his laugh was the loudest, his jest the readiest, and none did such deep justice to every toast: but within was the quick, aching sense of misery.

It is a strange thing, but so it is, that very brilliant spirits are almost always the result of mental suffering, like the fever produced by a wound. I sometimes doubt tears, I oftener doubt lamentations; but I never yet doubt the existence of that misery which flushes the cheek and kindles the eye; and which makes the lip mock, with sparkling words, the dark and hidden world within.

There is something in intense suffering that seeks concealment, something that is fain to belie itself. In Cooper's novel of the "Bravo," Jacques conceals himself and his boat, by lying where the moonlight fell dazzling on the water. We do the same with any great despair, we shroud it in a glittering atmosphere of smiles and jests; but the smiles are sneers, and the jests are sarcasms. There is always a vein of bitterness runs through these feverish spirits, they are the very delirium of sorrow seeking to escape from itself, and which cannot. Suspense and agony are hidden by the moonshine.

CHAPTER XLVI.

THE PAST.

Weep for the love that fate forbids
Yet loves, unhoping, on,
Though every light that once illumed
Its early path be gone.

Weep for the love that must resign
The soul's enchanted dream,
And float, like some neglected bark,
Adown life's lonely stream!

Weep for the love that cannot change
Like some unholy spell,
It hangs upon the life that loved
So vainly and so well.

Weep for the weary heart condemn'd
To one long, lonely sigh,
Whose lot has been in this cold world
To dream, despair and die!

It is a mystery how fate sometimes answers to our secret wishes. All night one thought made Norbourne's pillow restless, and formed part of every troubled dream. He rose, and it was easy to carry it into execution. The day before, his departure from London would have excited the greatest surprise. This morning, the first thing he saw was a letter from his mother, urging his immediate presence at Courtenaye Hall, on account of some pressing business, owing to a lawsuit having just terminated in their favour.

In his journey down, he must pass within twenty miles of Ethel Churchill's home. He at once resolved that he would see her; it was but to implore her forgiveness, and even Constance might forgive the wish. He hurried off, allowing himself no time to think; and the rapid motion and violent exercise produced their usual effect. The fever of the body triumphed over that of the mind; if not forgotten, it was, at least, lulled.

Late at night, he arrived at a little village about two miles from Mrs. Churchill's house. It required all the influence of his handsome face with the landlady, and his handsome purse with the landlord, to procure those three great requisites for a traveller—admittance, supper, and a bed. Completely wearied out, he retired to rest, and did not waken the following morning till later than he intended. Remembering Ethel's habit of walking before breakfast in the little plantation adjoining the house, he hurried his toilet, in a hope, which he scarcely acknowledged to himself, of meeting her there. He amazed the pretty hostess by refusing breakfast; however, flinging down double the amount of her already unconscionable bill, consoled her for his want of appetite. This done, he sprung on his horse, which he urged to the utmost speed till he came to the once well-known gate, which was the side entrance to the plantation. There he fastened his horse, and, flinging his cloak over the panting creature, entered the little wood.

It was just the beginning of spring; only a few of the trees had as yet ventured to put forth the scarce unfolded leaves; there was the promise of green, rather than the green itself, and that soft yellow, which has the bloom of a flower before the flowers themselves. The gay boughs of the oak were still bare; and the hollies were fresh and bright, though their scarlet berries and Christmas had passed away together. As yet, the banks were uncovered by the various creeping plants, which in June were so luxurious; but the maiden's hair flung down its long, green tresses, and every sunny nook had its group of primroses—the primrose, which is spring's second herald.

It is curious to note how gradually the flowers warm into the rich colours and aromatic breath of summer. First, comes the snow-drop, formed from the snows which give it name; fair, but cold and scentless: then comes the primrose, with its faint, soft hues, and its faint, soft perfume—an allegory of actual existence, where the tenderest and most fragile natures are often those selected to bear the coldest weather, and the most bleak exposure. This is fanciful; but the whole place was thronged with "fast coming fancies," so fairy-like were the shadows that fell from the pensile branches, so changeful the golden lights that glimmered on the scarcely budding boughs.

Norbourne felt the influence of the lovely hour and scene. Every step he took brought with it some gentle recollection; for a few

moments he wandered on, lost in a delicious reverie. But the past only brought the present more vividly before him—he started! for the first time, the folly and the error he was committing seemed to strike forcibly upon his mind. He turned pale, and leant, breathless, against an oak beside. What could he say to Ethel when he saw her?—he had no excuse that he might offer for his falsehood: what could he say?—nothing! What right had he, the husband of another, to offer Miss Churchill vain regrets, which to her were only insults? and Constance, his sweet, his devoted Constance, she who had not a wish nor a thought, but what were his own—how could he justify his conduct to her? That she might never know, was nothing. To his own heart he could not answer his meditated treachery; for treachery it was to tell another how much he grieved over a union in which she, at least, was wholly blameless. The tumult and excitement of his soul softened in the sacred presence of nature. He felt that he owed it alike both to Ethel and to Constance, to abandon his intended purpose.

"Yet once again," exclaimed he, passionately, "let me gaze on that beautiful and beloved face! let me see if sorrow has cast a shadow on its surpassing loveliness! I will not let her know how near I am, and how wretched! No, in secret and in silence will I look upon her once more; and then, farewell forever!"

Only those who know what it is to give up some cherished wish just on its very verge of fulfilment, and give up from that sense of right which it is hard to deny, and yet harder to execute—only they can tell what it cost Norbourne to give up his purpose of seeing Ethel: yet he did give it up; and advanced only with the hope of one distant look, relying on his knowledge of the various little paths to escape through the wood if any one came too near. At length, he stopped within the shelter of a large spreading arbutus, it was too near the house to advance further; but, though sheltered himself, he could see all the once familiar objects. There was the little fountain, the grassplot, and the summer-house. There they were as of old—they, at least, were the same. He welcomed them as old familiar friends; but, when he glanced around, the symptoms of change were on them as well. Then the pale hues of autumn were around; now, every thing was colouring with spring. He looked, but in vain, for the blue harebells beside the little fountain; they were gone, and with them, how much of hope and of affection had gone too! His heart beat, till he leant breathless on one of the spreading boughs. At that moment, he saw a figure move in the summer-house: it came towards the door: it was Ethel. At first he only saw the face—it was pale, sad; but there was a change even beyond that unwonted paleness. Gradually his eye took in her whole appearance. Early as it was, she was splendidly dressed. Her golden hair glittered with gems in the light of the morning; her robe

hite damask, flowered with silver;
white veil was half folded round

me had not courage to even think
se that, in spite of himself, would
t that moment he saw Mrs. Church-
ed by a gentleman, both richly at-
ie from the house. They advanced
ummer-house, and the cavalier ap-
Ethel, who still stood in her pensive
acted attitude, as if to lead her away.
id reluctantly as it seemed, she let
her hand; slowly and reluctantly,
at him take it. The three returned
use; and Norbourne could see that
e many guests assembled.

ne know the worst!" exclaimed he,
with frantic violence from the spot.
ed through the wood, and sprang
horse, intending to gallop to the vil-
ask about the family. He had not
for he had scarcely gained the road
met a party of peasants, dressed in
lay attire. One question was enough:
y woman answered him; "Yes,
ur honour, we are going to see Miss
ried to a grand gentleman from fo-
s." Norbourne asked no more; but,
urs to the horse, he galloped across
non, as if life and death had been
speed.

CHAPTER XLVII.

GOSIPPING.

re the spiders of society:
saw their pretty webs of lies and sneers,
themselves in ambush for the spoil.
b seems fair, and glitters in the sun,
poor victim winds him in the toll
ie dreams of danger, or of death.
e misery that such inflict!
a look, have power to wring the heart,
ve it struggling hopeless in the net
by the false and cruel, who delight
agenious torment they contrive.

AN's character is developed by the
: when once they come into action,
dly are the latent qualities called
in how brief a time what a wonder-
e is wrought! This process, rapid
r sex, was unusually rapid in Con-
The bitter fruit of her experience
the bean plant in the fairy tale,
o in a single night. Guileless, con-
d affectionate, she was a child in
ng but years when she married her
Till then she knew naught of the
t from books, books that teach so
i yet so little. A few weeks sufficed
n amazing alteration: timid and sub-
n difference appeared little on the
ut it worked not less certainly below.
her advantages of birth, station, and
t was impossible but that she must
me degree of envy; and, alas! for
ature, envy will always delight in
mortification.

were the disparaging remarks that
l.—10

reached, as they were intended to do, the ear
of their victim. On one less sensitive, and
more accustomed to the malice which, of all
others, seems the vice society peculiarly en-
genders, they would have fallen comparatively
harmless; but with Constance they struck to
the heart. She had been so happy in the idea
of Norbourne's attachment, that the doubt was
dreadful. This disposition was encouraged
by many casual expressions respecting Lady
Marchmont, and by some, also, that were in-
tentional. Among others, there was a Lady
Dudley, a family connexion of her own, who
having perceived Mrs. Courtenaye's jealousy
(for poor Constance was but little accustomed
to dissemble,) did her very best to encour-
age it.

Lady Dudley was just such a being as is
formed by an entire existence amid those

"Thick antitudes,
Called social, where all vice and hatred are."

Her youth had passed in intrigues and vani-
ties, and she still lived among them at second-
hand: she now talked what she formerly did.
Lady Marchmont was an object of her espe-
cial dislike; she feared her wit, and could not
forgive her youth and beauty. Moreover,
there was an interest in any *on dit* about one
so much the rage; her looks, laces, and say-
ings, were equally invaluable as matters of
gossip. Moreover, Lady Dudley flattered
herself with filling the next best part to the
principal, that of *confidante* with Mrs. Courte-
naye. Constance, had, however, too much
good taste, as well as good feeling, for this;
she had betrayed her jealousy, not confessed
it. Still, this was enough for her *soi-disant*
friend, who went on torturing her with stories
about Lady Marchmont's powers of fascina-
tion, and Lady Marchmont's coquetry.

"You do not know," said she, after a long
visit, which left Constance pale as a statue,
her lip feverish with anxiety, and eyes filled
with tears which she would not shed: "you
do not know what a dangerous person Lady
Marchmont is! I should not, my sweet, young
friend, warn you so much against her, but that
I take the deepest interest in your happiness!"

"You are too kind!" sighed Constance.

"You know your husband is a very young
man, and a very handsome one—beauty is a
dangerous gift!"

"Would I could try its danger!" thought
Mrs. Courtenaye, as she caught her own wan
and languid countenance in the opposite
glance.

"Now, all men are vain, quite as vain as
we are; indeed, I always say much more so,"
continued her tormentor; "and Mr. Courte-
naye's vanity must be flattered by Lady
Marchmont's admiration!"

"Do you think she admires him, then?"
asked his wife, in a startled tone.

"O, I say nothing," replied Lady Dudley,
with a sneer; "but we all know that Lady
Marchmont would fain lead captive every man
about town worth looking at. They say that
she applied to her conquests the answer of th

French actress, who, being asked if she could reckon up her lovers, replied, '*Oui, qui ne sçait compter jusqu'au mille ?*'"

"She is very lovely!" said Constance, mournfully.

"O, there are others as handsome as she is!" interrupted her ladyship; "but she is such a coquette—quite heartless; and, therefore, the more dangerous. Her passion is universal admiration; and she cares for nothing, so long as her vanity is but gratified: of course, I speak to you in complete confidence. Good-by, my dearest Mrs. Courtenaye; I say to you what I would not say to any one else for the world!"

So saying, she hurried off, impatient to say precisely the same thing to some fifty or more dearest friends. Just as she left the room, but in time to receive the warmest reception, and a "How charming, my love, you look to-day!" Lady Marchmont made her appearance.

"Ah!" exclaimed she, "I should know that Lady Dudley had been your visiter, you look so weary. There, I will be very good, and allow you five minutes to recover yourself."

"I am not very well to-day," said Constance, rising to receive her; "I have a headache." What would women do, if headaches were abolished? They are the universal feminine resource.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

CONFIDENCE.

She had that charming laugh which, like a song,
The song of a spring bird, wakes suddenly
When we least look for it. It lingered long
Upon the ear, one of the sweet things we
Treasure unconsciously. As steals along
A stream in sunshine, stole its melody,
As musical as it was light and wild,
The buoyant spirit of some fairy child;
Yet mingled with soft sighs, that might express
The depth and truth of earnest tenderness.

HENRIETTA took a seat, and soon began a lively conversation; but it is impossible to go on talking, if your listener either cannot or will not answer. Suddenly it struck her visiter that Mrs. Courtenaye had a lurking remembrance of her cold manner to Norbourn on the day of Mrs. Howard's *fête*.

"It was foolish of me," thought she, "I had no right to mark resentment."

With the view of doing this away, she began to make inquiries after Mr. Courtenaye.

"I see that you are too good a wife to be tempted into gayety during your husband's absence; but when he returns, I must persuade you to come and dine with us.

Constance rose from her seat; and, after two or three hurried turns up and down the room, came and sat down by Lady Marchmont, who noted her obvious agitation with *both surprise and sympathy*.

"You must forgive me," exclaimed she, in a hurried and distressed manner, unable longer to suppress the tears that fell in large, slow drops, still half kept back; "but I cannot look upon you and not feel my own wretchedness. I do not wonder that Norbourn loved you!"

"Loved me!" exclaimed Henrietta, too much astonished to say more.

"I know not," continued Constance, passionately, "what parted you, but you cannot blame me; I knew it not. I thought, O, vain folly! that it was me he loved. Why did he marry me? But I feel now, O, how bitterly! that I was not worthy of him. I, without beauty, grace—with nothing but a heart, whose deep love he will never know!"

She hid her face in her hands; the hysterical passion of tears, long subdued, now burst forth, and she wept bitterly, while Henrietta exhausted every effort to soothe her.

"You pity me!" at last exclaimed Constance; "will you not then leave to me the little that my unwearied affection may gain of his heart? You, so beautiful, so flattered, cannot know what it is not to have a hope or a fear but what is bound up in one beloved object! Tell me," and she knelt at Henrietta's feet, "that you will not seek to win him again from me?"

"There is some strange mistake here," said Lady Marchmont, deeply touched at the emotion she witnessed: "you speak as if some affection existed between Mr. Courtenaye and myself; I am sure that we are equally ignorant of it: but I hate mysteries, they are often miserable, and always mischievous; do tell me what you mean? Believe me that your present unhappiness originates in some misapprehension!"

"Were you never," faltered Constance, "engaged, or attached to Norbourn?"

"Me!" cried Lady Marchmont; "I never knew him till after my own marriage, and then very slightly. I know not how this strange fancy originated, but it has not the shadow of a foundation. Come, tell me candidly, what could have put it in your head?"

"I will," said Constance, who felt intuitively that Lady Marchmont spoke the truth: "I thought that there was something very peculiar in your manner at Mrs. Howard's *fête*; and Lady Dudley—"

"Say no more," interrupted Henrietta; "the very mention of that inveterate gossip accounts for every thing. Do let me, my dear Mrs. Courtenaye," and she took her hand with a kindness that was irresistible, "let me warn you against allowing your happiness to be the sport of a woman like that; one who would not care what misery she caused, if it gave her one moment's importance, or one moment's amusement. Use your own judgment with reference to what she is!"

"I own," replied Constance, "that I certainly neither like nor respect her."

"Why then allow her to influence you?" asked her companion.

"I was wrong, very wrong," returned the girl; "but she seemed kind to me, and—I sometimes feel so lonely. I am not strong enough to go out much, and the days very long here: in the country I had my flowers, and my flowers, and there were many who loved me. They were not, it is true, companions, but I returned home happier after visiting our cottages, where so many faces were brighter to welcome mine; but in this place every thing is so strange and so lonely, and I pass very many long and lonely hours, and pass them, perhaps, in nursing childish fancies."

There was something in this picture that only touched Lady Marchmont; she, too, liant as her lot appeared, had many long lonely hours—hours that craved for confidence and affection.

"Let us be friends," exclaimed she, with earnestness; "we shall do each other good. I grow too selfish, living only among cold, the vain, and the flattering; while you grow too sensitive, living too much amid your fancies and feelings."

Constance answered by taking the hands so kindly offered, and pressing them in her own, while Lady Marchmont continued:—

"I will tell you all my faults frankly before. I am very vain, for I cultivate my vanity on a principle, and cannot understand how we should neglect such a source of gratification. I take all the admiration I can on the same principle that kings take taxes: I regard it as my right. They will tell you: I am a coquette, but it is not true; I do not care enough about people; besides, I am impetuous, and too frank. Moreover, my notions on love are romantic and peculiar; I never talk about them. I am a bad temper, you will like me all the better for having occasionally to make up a quarrel with:—And now, shall we be friends?"

"I shall only love you too much," said Constance.

"O, that is a fault I shall readily overlook!" replied Henrietta, laughing, as she rose to depart: and fast friends they were from that day. Constance found a resource in the society of Lady Marchmont, and learnt from her something of more self-reliance, and a more accurate idea of the world in which she was to live. She daily became more attached to her: she saw her faults, though of a different kind to those Lady Marchmont herself confessed; but she loved her in despite of them; nor did the young countess attach herself less to her gentle friend. Henrietta was a much more affectionate temper than she could have confessed even to herself: she delighted in the pleasure which she gave; and, evening after evening would she sit with Constance, who was quite incapable of further reflection.

CHAPTER XLIX.

UNAVAILING REGRET.

Farewell! and when the charm of change
Has sunk, as all must sink, in shade;
When joy, a wearied bird, begins
The wing to droop, the plume to fade;

When thou thyself, at length, has felt
What thou hast made another feel—
The hope that sickens to despair,
The wound that time may sear, not heal;

When thou shalt pine for some fond heart
To beat in answering thine again;—
Then, false one, think once more on me,
And sigh to think it is in vain.

It was Ethel Churchill, dressed as a bride, and on her wedding morning, that Norbourne had seen. She had sought the summer-house for a few moments of quiet and solitude. There was a dead weight on her spirits, which she rather sought to indulge than to shake off. The torpor had succeeded to the violence of grief; nothing now seemed to interest her. All that constitutes youth had suddenly passed away; she looked forward to nothing, because it appeared to her experience, that to hope and to trust was to insure disappointment and deceit. Ethel actually shrank from the idea of happiness: she had been so happy once; and how dearly had that happiness avenged its brief and sweet presence! Gradually she had sunk into that worst state of misery, and one which in a woman it so frequently assumes; namely, a state of languid and listless dejection. Every thing was a trouble, and nothing a pleasure; while one day passed on into another—dull, monotonous, without an effort to rouse from her utter depression.

One evening she was startled from the gloomy revery in which it had grown her habit to indulge during the family histories, which were perpetual subjects of her grandmother's discourse, by the announcement that a visitor was expected the following day:—"One, Ethel," said the old lady, with a very significant look, "in whom I expect you to take a most peculiar interest."

Ethel shook her head, but said nothing; but her grandmother, who wished to be questioned, went on, as if it were a token of assent.

"And a very handsome young man he is. Perhaps, child, I ought not to say any thing about it; but I have never kept you back like most young women."

Ethel, by-the-by, had never, in the whole course of her life, ventured on offering an opinion in her grandmother's presence.

"Besides, as I wish you to look your best, I may as well tell you, that Mr. Trevanion is coming here to fulfil his part in the contract of marriage which passed between your parents when you were both children."

Certainly Mrs. Churchill's plan, for her

granddaughter to look the best, was any thing but efficacious, in the first instance; for Ethel sank back, pale, and almost fainting.

"Why, what is the matter with the child?" exclaimed the old lady; "there is nothing so very dreadful in a lover; but I shall leave you to find that out when he comes."

"You do not mean," cried Ethel, frightened into speaking, "to insist on my fulfilling a contract of which I never heard. Only let me live on quietly with you—I never mean to marry."

"Very proper to say so," returned Mrs. Churchill, with an air of calm approval; "young ladies ought never to consent till they are asked."

"But when I am asked," said Ethel, more impetuously than she had ever said anything in her life before, "I have only a refusal to give."

"Very right that you should say so now," replied her grandmother; "but let me caution you against taking any foolish fancies into your head, as if you could be allowed the same choice in a husband that you are in a riband."

"I cannot, will not marry him!" sobbed Ethel.

"Do not, my dear child, talk nonsense. You are not aware of the important interests involved in your marriage. Our wealth and our connexions are of importance to our party. In a few months, I hope that Mr. Trevanion will be able to assume the title so long in his family, of the Earl of Lanriggon. I tell you, in strict confidence, that King James has already affixed his royal seal to the patent. But these are no matters for you: go and gather some roses for me, and try to bring in some on your cheek, as well as in your hand."

CHAPTER L.

Why, what a history is on the rose!
A history beyond all other flowers;
But never more, in garden or in grove
Will the white queen reign paramount again.
She must content her with remember'd things,
When her pale leaves were badge for knight and earl;
Pledge of a loyalty which was as pure,
As free from stain, as those white depths her leaves
Unfolded to the earliest breath of June.

Mrs. CHURCHILL belonged to a class now completely passed away. The material of the species still remains; but the form under which it exhibits is different. She had the reputation of being learned; and a little learning went a great way in her time. Had she lived now, she would have talked of the last delightful lecture on gas, or the charming new treatise on carbonic acid; she would have studied German, and delighted in the society of "talented people." As it was, she knew some of the Latin names for plants in the herbal. She piqued herself on giving advice, and said very severe things; she also wrote very long letters, and was a warm partisan of the exiled Stuarts. Kind-hearted and well-meaning, she was narrow-minded and rigid,

only because she thought it beneath the dignity of a sensible woman to change her mind. Ethel knew that, having once announced her marriage, it would be impossible to alter her grandmother's determination; and it was as awful thing to venture on open opposition to one, whose will had been hitherto blindly obeyed. But Ethel was young and romantic: she resolved to throw herself on the generosity of the coming lover; and felt entirely assured that he must think the heart valueless, that had been, that was but too much still, the property of another. This resolve once taken, she prepared to wait patiently the proper time for carrying it into execution; and was again sad and languid as before.

Mr. Trevanion arrived: he was a tall, slight, and, certainly, a handsome young man, and perfectly aware of whatever advantages he possessed. He had lived chiefly abroad; and if any thing in England satisfied him, it was the satisfaction of abusing every thing. With Mrs. Churchill he soon became a first-rate favourite. His head was quite turned with mysteries, secret correspondences, and plots: he met her on her own weak point. Both delighted to hear themselves talk, and both talking themselves out of all rationality; for words, like wine, get up into the head: they passed hours in conversational conspiracies, till both the old woman and the young man believed that the house of Hanover only waited their impetus to tremble to its downfall.

Ethel found that it was not so easy to make her intended disclosure; for when she attempted to speak to Mr. Trevanion, she was overwhelmed with such a flood of flowery eloquence, that she was dismayed into silence. The time grew terribly near; and courage had often despair for its mother than any other parent. She seized an opportunity when he was walking up and down the terrace—in his own mind the very personification of Shakespeare's comet,

"Perplexing monarchs, with the fear of change,"

to walk also, and meet him. Of course, his political meditations were put to flight by her appearance. He requested permission to join her, and was soon eloquent in the description of the last *fête* that he had witnessed at Versailles.

Mr. Trevanion was one of those talkers, who are too much engrossed with their own subject matter to have much attention to bestow elsewhere; with them silence is attention. Ethel's wandering eye, and lip, tremulous with its effort to speak, would never have attracted his notice. To his utter astonishment, she interrupted a parenthesis, as brilliant as the rocket which it depicted, by saying,—

"Mr. Trevanion, I do not know what you will think of my boldness, but I must speak to you."

"Speak," said the gentleman, with a theatrical air; "and I will ask no other music." Agitated, blushing, and in a voice scarcely audible at first, she began her confession.

Gradually the strong emotion prevailed over the weaker one, and timidity was merged in feelings that grew more powerful as she proceeded.

"I have now told you all; forgive and pity me. I ask of yourself, how could I do otherwise than decline an engagement, when I have no heart to bestow?" The tears filled her dark blue eyes; never had she felt the shame and wretchedness of her position so forcibly before. "May I ask of you," continued she, in faltering tones, "to tell my grandmother, that our engagement is broken off?"

"Well, certainly," exclaimed Mr. Trevanion, "this is the most charming piece of *bergerie* it has ever been my good fortune to witness."

Ethel looked at him in blank amazement, while he went on.

"Indeed, my sweet Miss Churchill, I cannot be sufficiently grateful. Between ourselves, the country is rather *triste*, and you have given me positively a sensation; yet my forte is not the Arcadian: however, I will do my *petit possible* to console you for the loss of *le beau Lindor*, who was my predecessor."

"Sir," said Ethel, "I do not understand you."

"Very probably not!—charming ignorance!" replied Mr. Trevanion, with a patronizing expression. "A few weeks in Paris will soon give you a little knowledge of the world; but the effect of your first simplicity will be delicious. Ah, there is Mrs. Churchill! let us join her. I suppose, as I have been playing the part of *confident*, I must not make her laugh over our little romance."

Ethel was silent from surprise: she had prepared herself for anger—even sorrow; but ridicule left her without an answer. What could she say to a hearer, who only smiled, and to whom emotion was only a scene in a pastoral? That night she made an appeal to her grandmother; but in vain. Mrs. Churchill would have thought that she had sacrificed the cause of the Stuarts to a girl's folly, had she for a moment entertained the idea of dissolving an engagement with Mr. Trevanion. What could Ethel do, but submit? It was not as if she had had any hope in the future to enable her to bear up against the present; but hope she had none, and only hope can inspire resistance.

CHAPTER LI.

THE CHURCH.

The altar, 'tis of death! for there are laid
The sacrifice of all youth's sweetest hopes.
It is a dreadful thing for woman's lip
To swear the heart away; yet know that heart
Annals the vow while speaking, and shrinks back
From the dark future that it dares not face.
The service read above the open grave
Is far less terrible than that which seals
The vow that binds the victim, not the will;
For in the grave is rest.

Soon—how soon it appeared to come!—the day appointed for Miss Churchill's marriage

arrived. With a faint shudder, she looked from her window. The whole garden was bathed in sunshine; a light wind stirred the branches, which seemed filled with singing birds: she turned away; the light and the music were painful to her. Who has not felt this exaggeration of the sick heart, which reproaches inanimate nature with its lack of sympathy, which turns from the golden light of day, from the cheerful sights and sounds that fill the open air with rejoicing, as if the gladness only mocked their misery! Passively, she allowed her grandmother to hurry her toilet, who would not see how wan and ill she looked. When all was complete, she turned away from the glass as she had turned away from the window, with a deeper feeling of desolation. It was a relief to glide away unperceived; and almost mechanically she sought the open air, and entered the summer-house, from the habit of turning her steps thither, rather than from any will on her own part. She was not permitted to remain there long; and Mr. Trevanion, accompanied by Mrs. Churchill, conducted her to the apartment where the guests were assembled.

All the Jacobite gentry of that part of the country were collected together; though, it must be confessed, their appearance and their usual after-dinner conversation were rather at variance. Now they looked calm and comfortable, with as little the appearance of conspirators as possible; then they were (by their own account) the most oppressed of individuals, and the most devoted of partisans, ready to die, so that their wrongs were redressed, and the rightful king restored. There was a great show of gayety; for the neighbourhood being a dull and scattered one, any thing that wore the semblance of festival was doubly welcome.

Again Ethel felt how little sympathy was there with her sadness. A thousand wild plans of escape even now flitted across her mind; but they were vague and confused fancies, which she lacked the energy, even if she had had the power, to execute. A dull sense of suffering weighed upon her heart. She heard voices, she saw faces, but they produced no impression upon her; and she allowed herself to be handed into the carriage, almost without knowing what she did. The long and slow procession, at length, reached the church; and it took up almost as much time to range the different friends in their appointed and proper places. An old gentleman, a distant, and yet their nearest connexion, led Ethel forward, filled only with the idea of the important situation he himself held, in having to give away the bride. There she stood, her large blue eyes dilated far beyond their usual size, fixed on vacancy. There was not a tinge of colour on a cheek usually so blooming—nay, her very lip had lost its crimson: she looked as white as her dress.

Mrs. Churchill watched her anxiously: perhaps, now that it was too late, she repented having urged the match so peremptorily, as more than one doubt crossed her mind of the

future happiness of her gentle and affectionate child. She saw her there—wan, wasted, broken in spirits,—a victim, rather than a bride! but such misgivings were now in vain.

The clergyman had taken his place at the altar, when the attention of the party assembled was attracted to loud and unusual sounds in the churchyard. There was the galloping of horses, the clang of heavy steps and spurs, and the jingle of swords. The suspense was brief; for the next moment an officer, accompanied by a magistrate, with some half-dozen soldiers following, entered the church. In another instant the warrant was produced, and James Trevanion was arrested on a charge of high treason. All now was rage and confusion; and some of the younger among the bridal guests showed symptoms of resistance.

"Gentlemen," said the magistrate, calmly, "the door is surrounded by troops: opposition to my disagreeable duty can only bring fatal consequences to yourselves. Remove the prisoner at once. Madam," continued he, addressing Mrs. Churchill, "I am sorry to say that there are suspicious circumstances in which you are implicated. In consideration of your age and high respectability, I have ventured to take upon myself to answer for you; but, at present, I must request that you will accept the hospitality of my house."

Mr. Trevanion advanced forward; but the magistrate interposed.

"I can feel," said he, "for a gentleman in your circumstances! but it is my duty to see that no communication takes place between yourself and the ladies involved in the suspicion of treasonable practices. Your farewells must be made in my presence."

And how did Ethel feel?—like a wretch, under sentence of death, who, at the very scaffold, receives a reprieve. She was only alive to the joy of her release: for a moment, she thought of nothing but her own escape.

"Thank God!" exclaimed she, to the utter dismay of the two bridesmaids within hearing; and, throwing herself on her knees, she hid her face in her hands, and uttered a hurried and passionate thanksgiving.

CHAPTER LII.

PRESENTIMENT.

I feel the shadow on my brow,
The sickness at my heart;
Alas! I look on those I love,
And am so sad to part.

If I could leave my love behind,
Or watch from yonder sky
With holy and enduring care,
I were not loath to die.

But death is terrible to love:
And yet a love like mine
Trusts in the heaven from whence it came,
And feels it is divine.

Mrs. COURTENAYE's house was, that night, the gayest in London. Lord Norbourn wished that the *féte* given by his daughter should

be without a rival. He spared no expense, and Lady Marchmont no taste.

"I see clearly," said Constance to her, the very morning of her party, "that society is as much a science as astronomy; and, also, that, like poetry, one must be born with a genius for it. What should I have done without you? After once satisfying my anxiety that Norbourn would return in time (he looks sadly fagged with his journey), there seemed to me nothing more to care about."

"Why, dear child, of all the people that you expect, your husband is of the least importance!" replied Henrietta, laughing.

Constance shook her head, and smiled, as she answered,—

"Give me Norbourn, my father, and yourself, and I should be only too glad to see none beside. A crowd frightens me: I feel so keenly among strangers that there is nothing in me to attract or to please, that I shrink, with sudden fear, back into the little circle who, I hope, will love me for the deep and exceeding love that I bear to them."

"I am sure," exclaimed Lady Marchmont, passing her arm caressingly round Constance's neck, "not to love you, would be to have a heart of ice, or no heart at all. But you and I go through life on different principles: you ask of life its affections; I ask its amusements: I like to be admired; you like to be loved: you would tremble at the idea of an enemy; I should only think of one as giving me an opportunity of triumph: I should confide in my success, and feel quite grateful for the victory over them, which, I am sure, I should have."

"Ah!" exclaimed Mrs. Courtenaye, timidly, "beautiful as you are, gay as you always seem, I never think of you without a sensation of fear—fear for your sake, dear Henrietta!"

"Fear!" replied the other, her dark eyes kindling with a haughtier light; "I should like to know the sensation, it would be something quite new!"

"Nay," interrupted her friend, "so young, every thing must be new to you!"

"I do not know," returned Lady Marchmont, "whether I am young; I believe that I am, counting my years,—a most uncertain way of reckoning, by-the-by,—but I feel very old. I scarcely know any thing that really interests me, and I would give a great deal not to be so quicksighted as I am; it would be so pleasant to believe only a tithe of the professions that are made me."

"It is a dreadful thing to doubt!" returned Constance, sadly: "I do not know why, but there is something about you that discourages me almost as much as my father's conversation sometimes does. What is there that nature has not done for you? and yet you are not happy. I have watched you in your most brilliant moments: others went away saying, what charming spirits Lady Marchmont has! but I saw that they were forced."

"You are right!" exclaimed Henrietta:

I so often feel that I am not loved, and not loved as I deserve to be. I carry the coldness of my own hearth about with me; and with the usual exaggeration of self-love, I fancy people must see the dejection under which I often labour: I disdain their pity, and sit on a vixor of smiles to ward it off."

"Ours is a strange world," said Constance, in a sad and thoughtful tone; "I see little joyment, and much misery; for which, also, see no remedy: I am often frightened and sorry when I think of it. Every day more I am reconciled to the idea of leaving."

I could lay my head down on my last pillow, and sleep gladly, like a tired child, for my father."

"My dearest Constance," cried Lady Marchmont, "I will not let you talk in this dejected mood; many, many happy years are before you!"

"It is not a dejected mood, dearest friend," was the answer; "It is one of faith and of hope. God has, for his own good purposes, opened my heart from a world in which he means me to make but a brief sojourn. Only one is destined for an early grave ever felt as I: I speak not of my bodily health, though it grows weaker every day, but it is my own heart that foretells its doom. It craves rest and for peace; here it has beat too sickly, and too vainly."

"You, my gentle and timid Constance!" interrupted Henrietta.

"Ay, for years I lived in the wild worship of an earthly idol! I loved my cousin as one love whom nothing distracts from the cherished object! I was solitary, neglected, debarred by my health from the ordinary pursuits of my age, but one image supplied the place of all others: I have passed years thinking of Norbourne, till his own presence was scarcely more actual than my aching dream. I married him; and, for a time, forgot that earth was not heaven! I was so happy; and, as if I were to owe all to him whom I loved so utterly, my marriage gave me a share I never before possessed in my father's affection; and I found too, that I was happier for loving me. I forgot all of this life: it shut out eternity. I cannot tell you how I awakened from my dream, for came it was—so gradual, but so sad was my raking. Too soon the subtle instinct of heaven told me that I was not to Norbourne what I was to me!"

"No woman ever is to a man," interrupted Lady Marchmont: "your solitary education has led you to form ethereal fancies that can never be realized. It is impossible to be a more affectionate, or a kinder husband, than Mr. Courtenaye."

"He is too kind," replied Constance, mournfully; "he feels that he has to make up to me for the heart which I have not. I am punished for having worshipped too entirely an earthly idol: it has not been given to me to make that happiness which I would purchase, ah! how gladly, at the expense of my own! But he loves me not, and he loves another. Why he married me, I know not."

Lady Marchmont thought that Lord Norbourne's wealth was a too sufficient reason; but, for worlds, she would not have said so, and Constance continued:—

"Some might think that the riches of the heiress bought the hand, though it could not buy the heart; but it was not that which made me the wife of Norbourne Courtenaye. I have known him from a boy, generous and disinterested: others may judge of him even as they themselves would have acted, but I judge him by old and perfect knowledge: but I fear that my father used undue influence; perhaps he appealed to my cousin's pity. O, Henrietta! you talked of disdaining pity; I am thankful even for that; but it is a dreadful requital for love!"

She paused in agitated silence, and Henrietta felt that silence and caresses were at first her only answer; but, having soothed her companion into more of composure, she could not but add, "but you are married, and might both be happy yourself, and make your husband's happiness. It is not in any nature, more especially one kind and generous as his, to be insensible to your devotion, or to your many engaging qualities; why dwell on these sad and vain imaginations?"

"They are sad, but not vain," replied Constance; "but for them I should still cling too closely to a world I shall soon leave forever! I have at last learned to say, 'Not my will, but thine, O Father! be done.' I am content to think that he will remember me with a tender grief; and how could I bear to dwell for a moment on the agony of sorrow that he must feel, did he love me with a love like mine own, and had to part? It soothes me to feel that he will be spared that bitterest, that terrible despair."

"Do not speak thus," exclaimed Henrietta, her eyes filling with tears as she gazed on the face now so lovely, with its sweet and inspired expression.

"It relieves me," replied Constance, "my spirits were overburdened. The weakness of our nature subdues us to the last; but the time may come, when, freed from all the bitterness, all the selfishness that belongs unto mortal love, I shall watch over him even as an angel watches, and find my happiness in his, even in another and a better world!"

CHAPTER LIII.

THE FÊTE.

There was a feast that night,
 And colour'd lamps sent forth their odorous light
 Over gold carvings, and the purple fall
 Of tapestry; and around each stately hall
 Were statues pale, and delicate, and fair,
 As all of beauty, save her blush, were there;
 And, like light clouds floating around each room,
 The censers sent their breathings of perfume;
 And scented waters mingled with the breath
 Of flowers that died as they rejoiced in death.
 The tulip, with its globe of rainbow light;
 The red rose, as it languished with delight;
 The bridelike hyacinth, drooping as with shame,
 And the anemone, whose cheek of flame
 Is golden, as it were the flower the sun,
 In his noon-hour, most loved to look upon.
 At first the pillar'd halls were still and lone,
 As if some fairy palace, all unknown
 To mortal eye or step:—this was not long—
 Waken'd the lutes, and rose the sound of song;
 And the wide mirrors glitter'd with the crowd
 Of changing shapes: the young, the fair, the proud,
 Came thringing in.

MIDNIGHT brought with it all the world to Lord Norbourne's—at least that portion of it which calls itself the world, to the exclusion of all the rest. His usual good fortune attended him; and the management of a *fête* requires as much good fortune as any thing else. How many were in that glittering crowd whose names are still familiar to us! There was the Dutchess of Queensberry, who had not as yet cut the king and queen, looking strangely beautiful, and half tempting one to believe in the doctrine of transmigration; namely, that the soul of the Dutchess of Newcastle had transmigrated into the body of the modern peeress. There she was, doing rude things, and saying ruder, which everybody bore with the best grace in the world: then, as now, it was perfectly astonishing what people in general will submit to in the way of insolence, provided the said insolence be attended by rank and riches. Near her was the young and beautiful Dutchess of Marlborough, wearing the diamond necklace she had recently purchased with Congrève's legacy—last memorial of the small vanity which had characterized him through life. The money now lavished on the ostentation of a splendid toy, what a blessing would it have been to some one struggling with life's worst difficulties—poverty and pretence!

Lord Peterborough was talking to her,—a man sent into the world to show that the Amadis could have its prototype in reality; and yet all his heroic qualities dashed with a ridicule, as much as to say, the present age is quite unfit for them. Next came a crowd of young beauties, who shed their own brilliancy around; and near were a group of cavaliers, "fine gentlemen about town," who, whatever else they might doubt, had not a doubt of their own irresistibility. And, crowning glory of the evening! a conquest was made, a conquest so sudden, so brilliant, and so obvious, that it was enough to give any *fête* at which it occurred the immortality of a season.

At Lord Norbourne's express petition, the beautiful Miss Walpole was allowed to emerge from the seclusion of Houghton, where she had been wasting her sweetness on the desert

air for the last two years. Very lovely, and very simple-minded, she was allowed more of her own way than it is ever good for a woman to have. Engrossed in politics, her brother left her almost entirely to her own amusements and fancies. Unfortunately, she was induced to accept an invitation to stay at Lord Wharton's, a man notorious for what are so strangely misnamed gallantries, and whose lady was as bad as himself. She had scarcely reached the place before, also, her intended visit reached Sir Robert's ears. With him a resolution always carried itself into action with all possible rapidity: he ordered post-horses to his carriage, and went himself as courier to precede it. Making no excuses, and listening to none, he insisted on his sister's immediate appearance and departure, and sent her off next day into Norfolk. Fortune, however, to-night seemed resolved on making full amends to a beauty cut short in the first flush of success, and sent to waste two of her prettiest years in the dull seclusion of an old house in the country.

"What blooming simplicity!" exclaimed Lord Townshend.

"Positive milk of roses!" exclaimed Lady Mary Wortley Montague; but the sneer passed unheeded; and Lord Townshend, crossing the room, entreated Mrs. Courtenaye to present him to her lovely young friend.

Miss Walpole was a soft, sleepy-looking beauty, with a pretty, startled, fawnlike look in her large eyes; shy, silent, and with gathered blushes of two summers on her cheek: but, if she had few words, she had a great many smiles, and of these Lord Townshend had the entire benefit. She was just one of those sweet and simple creatures whose attraction Talleyrand so well described, when he was asked what was the charm he found in Madame —'s society: "*C'est que cela me repose!*"

Nothing could be more satisfactory than this conquest was to Lord Norbourne; he saw how it would strengthen the connexion between Walpole and Townshend, and he liked the *éclat* of its happening at his daughter's house. No one in his secret soul more despised the small vanities and successes of society, while he, also, well knew the advantage to which they might be turned; but he had to-night one deeper and dearer source of gratification—it was seeing his daughter look so well. Lady Marchmont had superintended her toilette, and it was the very triumph of exquisite taste; every thing about it seemed as fragile and delicate as herself. The robe was the palest pink taffety, trimmed with the finest lace, and a magnificent set of emeralds served to contrast her soft fair hair. The excitement of the evening lighted up her eyes, and warmed her cheek with a faint but lovely colour—

"The crimson touch'd with pale."

The royal party had just departed; Queen Caroline having said all those flattering things which come with such a grace from royalty,

no one knew better how to apply it; and the circle, sufficiently satisfied, began to grow gayer.

Constance, your hand is very cold, Norbourn, approaching him, are exerting yourself too much: to the next room, it is much better."

He led him with the deeper colour of one kind word of his made her the quickest and sweetest time, and to go into the adjoining room. There was a simultaneous movement there was a popular singer at the spot where a favourite song of the hour felt the arm that was in his hand to him for support, and then he had scarcely time to prevent her from falling to the ground. He caught her as she was rushing from her nose and had broken a blood-vessel!

CHAPTER LIV.

THE SICK-ROOM.

His walk'd on weary earth
keness, thou wert one of them.
heaven was with thee, but subdued
life's inevitable lot;
et spirit did assert its home
I hope, and only own'd its yoke
; love that bound it to its kind.

gray light of the morning was through the closed windows, and mournful light of a sick-room yet full; around were signs of recent strange contrast to the ghastly wax lights were slowly burning on the dressing-table, and before the scattered a thousand gay toys. Flasks of precious scents, left hasty, made the atmosphere heavy, while gems of immense value gleamed uselessly among them.

of the preceding evening had in a chair near, and on the floor set of rare, but faded flowers, and an; but the glitter of the fan was red blood-spots. What now of the vanities of the night? Not a thing! Wrapped in a night-gown, which had been hastily slipped off, her hair loosened from its but with some of the neglected shining in it, lay Constance Norbourn, as fast ebbing away, and the doctor said that there was no hope. Pale, white as the pillow on which she lay the last time; a dull film had over the eyes which yet dwelt lovingly beside her; and her fallen face the faint purple circle around it, near approach of death. Lady still in the gay costume of the evening, sat on the bed, and supported

the head of her dying friend; while Norbourn knelt beside, holding the wan hand, whose pulsation grew feebler every moment. Lord Norbourn stood beside, and watched his last, his most beloved child, dying before him; his last hope, his last sweet link of affection breaking.

"It cannot be!" exclaimed he, in a burst of uncontrollable emotion: "so young, so very young, to die! Tell me that your skill can save her, and take all I have in the world!"

The physician took his hand, and strove to draw him aside; but the attempt caught the eye of the sufferer; she strove to raise herself, and extend her hand to her father, but it dropped heavily on the coverlid.

"Let him stay!" said she, faintly; and, looking towards the physician, continued: "I know I am dying, but death is not yet in my heart. Can you not give me a moment's strength? any thing to dispel, for a little while, this faint sickness? A few words are all I want to say, I cannot die without saying them!"

"Let her have her own way," whispered the medical man; and, pouring a few restorative drops into a glass of water, he held it to her lips, while Lady Marchmont bathed her temples with essence.

Either they revived her, or expiring nature felt the unconquerable strength of love mighty even to the last. She sat half upright, supported on Henrietta's shoulder; and, taking her father's hand, she clasped it with her husband's.

"He will be your child," said she; "my remembrance will be the link to bind you together. My beloved father, you owe him a debt only affection can repay. Think how kind he has always been to your wearied and suffering child: night after night he has watched over me; day after day he has given up pleasures and occupations to yield me the only enjoyment of which I was capable—the conscious happiness of his presence. And you, dearest Norbourn, will you not cling to his old age like a dear and only son? Love him, were it only for the great love that I have borne unto you!"

Again her head dropped on the pillow, and her father and husband felt the hands that had clasped theirs relax their faint pressure, and again Henrietta wiped away the cold dew that stood on her forehead. She lay for some minutes motionless, save when the heavy eyelids were slowly raised, and her dim eyes yet dwelt fondly on those who watched her least movement. All at once her eyes kindled, and she again raised herself, with a little of Henrietta's instant assistance. Constance put her hand under the pillow, and drew from thence a small Bible.

"Father!" exclaimed she, "this has been my constant companion, let it henceforth be yours. May it teach you, even as it has taught me, the blessed hope in which I die: we shall meet again in a happier and a better world! Henrietta, dear and kind friend, think sometimes of the peace and faith which sup

port me even in death. Father, my beloved father! could I leave you as I do, with words of comfort, but for that divine belief whose trust is immortal! God bless you!"

She sank back, fainting; but this time it was Norbourn's arm that supported her: once again her eyes unclosed, and fixed on her husband's face with an expression of the most utter tenderness: from thence they never moved again. The eyelids closed wearily, and there was a convulsive movement of the hands; then came a frightful stillness, broken by a low gurgling in the throat. The mouth fell; the hand Lord Norbourn clasped grew still and rigid; her husband bent over her, and touched her lips—they were ice—it was a corpse that he held in his arms.

CHAPTER LV.

The fountain's low singing is heard on the wind,
Like a melody bringing sweet fancies to mind;
Away in the distance is heard the far sound
From the streets of the city that compass it round,
Like the echo of mountains, or ocean's deep call:
Yet that fountain's low singing is heard over all.

The turf and the terrace slope down to the tide
Of the Thames, that sweeps onward a world at its side;
And dark the horizon with masts and with mull
Of the thousand tall ships that have weather'd the gale;
While beyond the arch'd bridge the old abbey appears,
Where England has garner'd—the glories of years.

There are lights in the casement—how weary the ray
That asks from the night-time the toils of the day!
I fancy I see the brow bent o'er the page,
Whose youth wears the paleness and wrinkles of age;
What struggles, what hopes, what despair may have been,
Where sweep those dark branches of shadowy green!

The last gleams of a summer sunset were reddening amid the topmost boughs of the Inner Temple garden, while the shadow fell, dark as the night it heralded, on the turf below. Though in the heart of a vast city, it was impossible to imagine a more perfect picture of repose than was here presented. Not a creature was to be seen; the birds rested on the boughs, undisturbed by a fluttering wing or a snatch of song. There were red and white roses growing around: but the rival flowers were unstirred by even a breath of wind; they were still as the ashes of the once stirring spirits that gathered them as badges for their fatal warfare. Strange that the flower so peculiarly the lover's own, around which hung the daintiest conceits of poesy, on which the eye lingers, to dream of the cheek it holds loveliest on earth—strange that the rose should have been sign for the fiercest struggle ever urged by party strife—a strife that laid desolate the fair fields of England for so many years. And yet, how much chivalric association has Shakespeare flung around their bloom! But for him, the wars of the "rival houses" would be but obscure chronicles of inglorious wars—fighting for fighting sake; no liberty to be defended or obtained, and no foreign enemy driven triumphantly from the frontier: but for him, "the aspiring blood of Lancaster" would long since have sunk in the ground. But Shakespeare has

called life out of the past; a thousand passions of humanity hang around those white and red flowers. He has given the lasting archive to the high-born house that boasted,—

"Our airy bulweth in the cedar's top,
And dallies with the wind, and scorns the sun."

It is he who has given the life of memory to "the princely Edward," the subtle Richard, the brave-spirited Margaret, and the sad philosophy of the meek Henry, which comes to many weary of a bleak and troubled world; and never do we feel how completely Shakespeare was our national poet, till we tread his own *locale*.

I confess I have a great disdain for the west end of the town. It belongs to the small, the petty, and the present. From Hyde Park Corner to Charing Cross, all is utterly uninteresting: then history begins. We have the feudal state in the gloomy and Gothic grandeur of Northumberland House; we pass along the Strand, where Jack Cade pursued his brief triumph—the prototype of every popular insurrection unbased on any great principle—sudden, cruel, and useless! We have the last fine speech of Lord Scales in our ears,—

"Ah, countrymen! If, when you make your prayers,
God should be so obdurate as yourselves,
How would it fare with your departed souls?"

and the green solitude of the Temple garden is the very place to muse upon his words. We leave the crowded street behind: we linger for a moment beside the little fountain, the sweetest that

Ever sang the sunny hours away,
Or murmur'd to the moonlit hours of love.

It is, I believe, our only fountain, and all the associations of a fountain are poetical. It carries us to the east, and the stately halls of the caliphs rise on the mind's eye; and we think over the thousand and one stories which made our childhood so happy, and stored up a world of unconscious poetry for our future years: or else it conjures up the graceful old Italian histories of moonlight festivals, when the red wine was cooled, and the lute echoed by the soft sound of falling waters. We leave the world of reality behind us for that of romance. The little fountain keeps, with its music, the entrance, as if to lull all more busy cares before we enter that quiet garden. Once entered in, how much lies around to subdue the troubled present with the mighty past! The river is below, with its banks haunted by memory.

The whole history of England—and it is a glorious one—is called up at a glance. Westminster Abbey—the altar of the warrior, and the grave of the poet—sheds its own sanctity on the atmosphere; and yet to look beneath the still shadow of those stately trees, in the spiritual presence of the departed, life is as troubled and as anxious as elsewhere; the cares of to-day predominate, let the scenes around be what they may.

"I cannot help," said Walter Maynard, as gazed, listlessly, from one of the upper dows, "reading my fate in one of those e boats now rocking on the tide, only fast-d by a rope, scarcely visible to the passer-

So am I tossed on the ebbing tide of life ow in sunshine, now in shade—seemingly , yet, in reality, fettered by the strong, igh slight chain of circumstance. For a ll sum, any passenger may enter that boat direct its course; and here again is simili-. I am at the beck of others. I may eely think my own thoughts, they must in whatever channel public taste may oee; and that puts me in mind how I proed Curl his pamphlet this very night. w weary I am of exhausting the resources anguage in dressing up the vague common-es of party, or giving plausibility to so-oms I feel to be untrue! but it must be e:" and, muttering to himself,

"For inspiration round his head,
The goddesses Want her plinions spread,"

hrew his table towards him, and began to te.

The scene of his labours, and his own ap- rance, were much changed since his first ring in London. Still, there was an air of less discomfort in his room; nothing was ts place; books, foils, papers, and clothes, e scattered together, and a female mask beside his inkstand. He was fashionably ssed; but looked, as was really the case, f he had not been in bed the previous night. : face was worn, and one red flush burnt on h cheek; though even that could scarcely nate the sunk and heavy eye. After a minutes passed, first in writing, then in sing what he had written, "It is of no use," l he, flinging down the pen, "I am not th a single phrase; alas! I want motive— mere necessity of exertion is not enough. uld that I could dream as I once dreamed! t I could still think fame the glorious reat- I once held whole life's labour would aply purchase! But what does it matter, ether there be a name or no on the tombstone t weighs down our cold ashes? Ah! I proed Marston his verses to-morrow: I sell my nions, I may as well do the same with my timents;" and again he drew the paper to-rds him.

At first he wrote mechanically, and flung le one sheet of paper, and then another; as no longer the eager and impassioned ter, who, in his early composition, forgot nt, cold, and misery; no, the real had en, like dust, into his soul. Last night's ees had left him weary and feverish; yet all shapes that temptation can assume, ely that of social success is the most fas-ating.

The imaginative temperament is full of vivid ations, of fanciful imagery, and sudden ughts, all of which are impelled by their ure to communication; and to find that this amunication interests or amuses, is a power-stimulus. The vanity is at once encou-ed and gratified; while the present small

triumph is too readily taken as earnest for a greater one. The vanity I speak of is vanity of the highest and best kind; it belongs to the class of our most ethereal emotions; it asks "golden opinions from all ranks of men," because it is keenly susceptible, and has an even feminine craving for sympathy; it asks not so much praise as appreciation; it is generous and self-devoted: still it is vanity.

There is also in mental exertion an absolute necessity for reaction: how often do the thoughts, long confined to one subject, crave, as it were, to spring out of themselves, or to run off in any opposite direction! To this may be ascribed the difference that often exists between the writings and the conversations of genius. In the first is embodied the moral truth of their being, worked out by strong belief and deep feeling; the other contains all that is skeptical and careless,—it is the glitter of the waters when not at rest. The thousand paradoxes that spring up, are thrown off both for amusement and for relief; and recklessly flung aside by the utterer, who never means them to be taken as the creed of his real sentiments, or of his more earnest thoughts.

Walter Maynard was melancholy, impassioned, and sensitive; his heart preyed upon itself when alone: but, in society, he was lively, witty, and easily carried away by the impetus of discourse. Last night, the ready answer, the quick ridicule, the quaint imagery, which clothed his ideas as some fantastic garment, had made him the life of that gay meeting; but to-day he was paying the penalty of over-excitement. Fatigued and depressed, he saw nothing but difficulties and labour before him. He took up the papers beside him, and more than one unpaid bill was mingled with them. Instead of forcing upon him the necessity of exertion, they discouraged him from attempting it: of late, he had led a very gay life.

Norbourne Courtenaye had introduced him to several young men about town, who, rich and idle, were only too glad to fall in with so amusing a companion. Midnight after midnight passed away in their society; for Walter was flattered and excited. But deep in his inmost soul he felt that this was not the fate he had purposed to achieve amid the green valleys of his youth. His early dreams haunted him like reproaches; and every morning he rose with the full purpose of pursuing some more settled plan: but he lacked motive, he had no one dependent on his industry; and every day he grew to care less and less for hopes, that he now overharshly held to be illusions.

To see much of mankind sickens the philosopher and the poet; only in solitude can he continue to work for their benefit, or to crave for their sympathy. An expression that Pope had used while talking to Walter, had produced a far deeper impression than its utterer suspected, or, perhaps, intended. "If," said Pope, "I were to begin life over again, knowing what I know now, I would not write a single verse."

Maynard could not help thinking, "Of what avail is toil, if such be the result? Have I, then, devoted life to a shadow? is its pursuit weary, and its possession worthless? Yet this is what our greatest poet says of poetry."

CHAPTER LVI.

O, what a waste of feeling and of thought
Have been the imprints on my roll of life!
What worthless hours! to what use have I turn'd
The golden gifts which are my hope and pride!
My power of song, unto how base a use
Has it been put! with its pure ore I made
An idol, living only on the breath
Of idol worshippers. Alas! that ever
Praise should have been what praise has been to me—
The opiate of the mind!

THE rosy shadows of evening had deepened into purple, and a soft, faint obscurity wrapped all surrounding objects; but Walter Maynard still hung over the scroll, on which he had at last begun to write. Composition, like every thing else, feels the influence of time. At first, all is poetry with the young poet; his heart is full of emotions eagerly struggling for utterance: every thing suggests the exercise of his own sweet art. A leaf, a flower, the star far off in the serene midnight, a look, a word, are enough for a poem. Gradually this profusion exhausts itself, the mind grows less fanciful, and poetry is rather a power than a passion. Feelings have hardened into thoughts, and the sensations of others are no longer almost as if they had been matter of experience. The world has become real, and we have become real along with it. Our own knowledge is now the material wherewith we work; and we have gathered a stock of recollections, bitter and pleasant, which now furnish the subjects that we once created: but these do not come at the moment's notice, like our former fantasies: we must be in the mood; and such mood comes but seldom to our worn and saddened spirits. Still, the "vision and the faculty divine" are never quite extinguished; the spiritual fire rises when all around is night, and the sad and tender emotion finds its old accustomed resource in music.

Such was now the case with Walter. The softening influence of the quiet garden, and the dreamy evening, had gradually subdued him. Scenes, long since forgotten, had been peopling his solitude with one still cherished image paramount over all; one young fair face, whose sweet eyes seemed to look upon him reproachfully: but his own words best show the weary spirit now disquieted within him,—

Faint and more faint amid the world of dreams,
That which once my all, thy image seems,
Pale as a star that in the morning gleams.

Long time that sweet face was my guiding star,
Bringing me visions of the fair and far,
Remote from this world's toil and this world's jar.

Around it was an atmosphere of light,
Deep with the tranquil loveliness of night,
Subdued and shadowy, yet serenely bright.

Like to a spirit did it dwell apart,
Hush'd in the sweetest silence of my heart,
Lifting me to the heaven from whence thou art.

Too soon the day broke on that haunted hour,
Losing its spell, and weakening its power,
All that had been imagination's dower.

The noontide quench'd that once enchanted ray;
Care, labour, sorrow, gather'd on the day;
Toll was upon my steps, dust on my way.

They melted down to earth my upward wings;
I half forgot the higher, better things—
The hope which yet again thy image brings.

Would I were worthier of thee! I am fain,
Amid my life of bitterness and pain,
To dream once more my early dreams again.

Walter was disturbed by a low rap at the door. It was so indistinct and hesitating, that, at first, he thought himself mistaken; a second summons, however, led him to rise and open to his visitor. It was the very person that he foreboded—Mr. Curl. The gentleman stood for a moment, watching him close the door very reluctantly; and then took refuge, rather than a seat, in the window, having most ingeniously contrived to place two chairs, as a sort of barrier, between himself and his host. Walter resumed his place, and each kept silence for a few moments: a silence broken by Walter himself.

"I am afraid," said he.

"Afraid of what?" exclaimed Curl, looking round with an air of alarm.

Maynard subdued a smile, and continued,—
"I am afraid I have been a little too bitter about Sir Robert. Let me read to you one or two passages that I think would bear softening."

Curl's face lighted up; a gleam of satisfaction kindled his keen eyes. "No, no!" cried he, "never soften down any thing; least of all, what you say of a political opponent. As to reading your pamphlet, I never let my authors read to me. What they say is no business of mine; I only sell books: I neither have them read to me, nor do I read them. But give me your papers; the press is waiting."

"Really, Mr. Curl," said Maynard, hesitating, "there is so much that I wish to add—"

"Very foolish," replied the publisher, "to add any thing; keep it for the next time. Why should you do more for me than I ask? so give me the papers."

"They are not quite ready," answered Maynard.

"Not ready!" cried Curl.

"But you shall have them by six o'clock to-morrow," interrupted Walter; "you could not begin printing before. The fact is, I was worried and out of spirits this morning."

"The very time, of all others, to write," ejaculated his visitor; "being out of humour, which is what is usually called out of spirits—being out of humour with the whole world gives such zest to your spleen against individuals."

"I am sick of every thing and everybody!" exclaimed Walter.

"Very likely," replied the other, calmly; "so used I when I was young as you, and any thing went wrong with me. Now I know that it is of no use caring much, let what will happen."

ould think the same," muttered
glad you do not," replied Curl;
would be worth nothing."
actly what I am worth!" ex-
er, colouring. "The truth is,
annot write when I am plagued
and a tiresome dun this morning
every idea that I had in the

ard," said the bookseller, in a
it is very wrong to run in debt."
I help it?" returned Walter,

wise you," continued the other,
solemnity, "never to have any
ch you cannot pay at the time.
re the worst paymasters in the

ied Walter, "since you have
rself the office of advice, I hope
an to take that of assistance.
a good creature, pay me at once
et, which, I give you my honour
n, shall be in your hands by six
row.

Curl, "what you ask is against
; you are in the second stage of

ou mean?" asked his auditor.
ject," was the answer, "to ad-
to the young writer commenc-
it encourages him, shows him
lo; and, moreover, he is far the
of the two to see himself in
nen he publishes and succeeds,
money will be made as easily
first; he begins to think much
and has used up his first stock
en I decline advancing money,
nly want that makes him work.
second stage!"

ured a yet deeper crimson; he
ned to throw papers and pub-
ne window, which was tempt-
A moment passed, and he was
; he felt that he had neither
e for complaint, his own folly
lame. "Well," said he, with
"I, as a writer of moral essays
for the 'good of my country,'
object to principles; they cer-
a sentence admirably: but let
ething else. I am thinking of
dy: 'The Lavinia,' of whom I
things, would turn everybody's
quette."

like real life," replied Curl.
erve people's heads are turned,
by something that approaches
thing as possible; but I have
ts to pay, and must wish you
,"

ing," said Walter; and, bow-
er, rose to open the door.
ed on the threshold; then, sud-
round, he approached the table.
l," said he, in a tone of voice
to his usual hard and abrupt

manner, "I do not see why I should keep to
my principles any more than others. It is a
weakness to like anybody; but I like you—
you are of a different order to those with whom
I generally come in contact. You are going
all wrong; you are pale and feverish; mind
and body cannot stand the hard exercise to
which you put them both: don't kill yourself:
you'll like life better the longer you live.
There's the money for the pamphlet: I know
you will let me have it soon. Go to bed to-
night.

The sound of the gold rang upon the table—
but before the echo ceased, Curl was gone

CHAPTER LVII.

A MATRIMONIAL TETE-A-TETE

These are the things that fret away the heart—
Cold, careless trifles; but not felt the less
For mingling with the hourly acts of life.
It is a cruel lot for the fine mind,
Full of emotions generous and true,
To feel its light flung back upon itself:
All its warm impulses repell'd and chill'd,
Until it finds a refuge in diadems!
And woman, to whom sympathy is life,
The only atmosphere in which her soul
Developes all it has of good and true:
How must she feel the chill!

"How fond she was of flowers!" exclaimed
Lady Marchmont, turning sadly away from a
stand of choice plants, which Mrs. Courtenaye
had sent her, two days before her death;
"there was a likeness between them—so frail,
so fair, and doomed so soon to perish. She
was too good to last; and I feel as if I had
lost an angel from my side. I was always
better when I had been with her."

A rap at the door of her closet interrupted
her soliloquy.

"I thought," muttered she, "that I had
given strict orders that no one should be ad-
mitted—well, come in!" and Lord Marchmont
made his appearance. "The very person I
most wished to see!" exclaimed Henrietta,
starting up eagerly to receive him.

"My dear Lady Marchmont, your energy is
positively startling," said he, slowly articu-
lating his words, and deliberately seating him-
self in an arm-chair, which he moved twice;
once to avoid the air from an open window,
and next to avoid the sun.

His wife well knew that it was in vain to
speak till he had finished his arrangements for
his personal comfort; and she solaced her im-
patience by tearing a rose to pieces.

Lord Marchmont was about thirty years of
age, and what is generally called a fine look-
ing man. His figure was good, as far as his
height and proportion went; but his move-
ments wanted ease, and, consequently, grace;
and there was something of self-importance in
his air—the last thing in the world to prepos-
sess a beholder in his favour. We may ad-
mit the superiority of another, but we very
much object to their assuming it as an unde-
niable fact. His features were high and good,
with a strongly marked aquiline nose; but t

mouth neither gave sweetness, nor the eye light, to his face. His eyes were of a cold, dim blue, that never seemed to vary; they were unfamiliar with tears, and the pupil never brightened with laughter. His lips were thin, and, when they did smile, it was stiff, and made up like the embroidery on his coat. His dress was splendid; his hands glittered with rings, his snuff-box was covered with diamonds, and his ruffles were of the finest Mechlin lace. The only fault was the want of harmony in colouring; the one hue destroyed the effect of the other. I am persuaded, that where there is no eye for colours, something of that keen susceptibility is wanting, which constitutes the poetical and picturesque; and, certainly, to neither of these qualities had his lordship the slightest claim. His style of conversation was made up of set sentences; and his manner, what his inferiors called overbearing, and his equals tiresome. His mind was made up of lessons and examples, he only reasoned by precedents; every thing with him went by example, and it was a relief to him when he could quote an authority. If he had a passion, it was love of money: he loved it both for its own sake—that close kind of attachment which money certainly does inspire—and also for the enjoyments that it could procure. He liked the pleasures of the table, and he liked attendance; he was a sort of Sublime Porte to his valets. Generally speaking, his comprehension was slow, and his ideas narrow; but the moment his own interest was concerned, it was astonishing how his perception enlarged: he became cautious, if not enlightened; and cunning, if not shrewd. In short, his character might be summed up in a word—Lord Marchmont was an intensely selfish man.

Being, at length, comfortably settled in his *'auteuil'*, one foot balanced on a chair, and the other reposed on a stool, his snuff-box opened, and his perfumed handkerchief ready,—Henrietta thought that she might begin to speak.

“I wanted so much to see you,” exclaimed she.

“Very flattering,” replied his lordship, with a grave inclination.

“I have so much,” continued she, “to talk to you about.”

“Perhaps, madam,” interrupted Lord Marchmont, in a slow and solemn tone, “you will accord me my privilege of speaking first. I have also much to say to you.”

It was now Henrietta's turn to seek a comfortable position; and, sinking back on the sofa, she began to pick another rose to pieces. To this his Lordship paid no attention, he had a certain number of words to say, and the idea never crossed him but that they must be of paramount interest. He rarely looked at the person to whom he was talking; his glance dwelt either on his feet, or his hands or his snuff-box—something, in short, that was more peculiarly his own; to say nothing of occasional glances at the looking-glass opposite. He talked as if he were reading aloud, and *that in the most monotonous manner.*

“It is my duty, madam, to tell you,” he began, in a solemn tone, “that I exceedingly disapprove of your conduct.”

Henrietta's colour rose. “This is the first time I have heard of it,” exclaimed she; “if you —”

“Pray, madam, do not interrupt me,” said Lord Marchmont; “you may be quite sure that I never made an assertion which I am not prepared to prove. I again repeat, that I exceedingly disapprove of your conduct, in which I am more surprised you should persist, as you are aware of my complete disapprobation.”

“What have I done?” asked his listener.

“Again, madam, am I under the necessity of requesting that you will abstain from interruption. The petulance of your sex is especially shown in trifles. As I heard his Grace, the Duke of Wharton, observe, only yesterday, —‘women never will listen.’ This was his remark while we were walking in the Mall together; and I could not but be struck by its profound truth. I am not above being instructed, whatever, madam, you may think to the contrary.”

Henrietta bit her lip to prevent herself from saying, that the task of instruction appeared to her, in this instance, a very hopeless one; and his lordship went on to observe,—

“I am sorry to see that, this morning even, you persist in disobeying me. I repeat, that I entirely disapprove of your line of conduct.”

“Why, what am I doing now but listening to you? Is that what you disapprove?”

“To listen to me, madam, is your duty: though,” said he, in a voice growing every moment more solemn, “I regret to say, that you pay but little attention to it. Again I assert, that I have only too much reason to complain of your conduct.”

CHAPTER LVIII

PRUDENCE IN POLITICS.

How often, in this cold and bitter world,
Is the warm heart thrown back upon itself.
Cold, careless, are we of another's grief;
We wrap ourselves in sullen selfishness;
Harsh-judging, narrow-minded, stern and chill
In measuring every action but our own.
How small are some men's motives, and how mean
There are who never knew one generous thought;
Whose heart-pulse never quicken'd with the joy
Of kind endeavour, or sweet sympathy—
There are too many such!

It is rather alarming, in a conjugal tête-à-tête, when your husband tells you he only comes to complain of your conduct, and Lord Marchmont's severity of aspect was quite awful; however, Henrietta only gave him a look of inquiry, and he went on:—

“It was full three days ago that I told you how I hated the sight of black, yet you wore it yesterday evening, and I observe that your ribands are black this morning.”

Tears started in the countess's eyes, but she repressed them; and, forcing a smile, said,

“I am glad to find that it is not my conduct,

it my dress, that meets your disapprobation."

"I thought," replied her husband, "and the event proves that I was right in so thinking, at you would only laugh at what I urge; it women are incapable of a serious thought!"

"Well!" returned Lady Marchmont, "at events, you must allow me to be flattered the interest you take in my personal appearance!"

"You are quite mistaken!" exclaimed Lord Marchmont; "I know too well what I owe my own dignity as a man, to interfere in such feminine trifles, unless peculiar circumstances gave a temporary importance, which certainly does not belong to their ephemeral nature: I object to your wearing black on political grounds."

Henrietta looked at him with undisguised astonishment.

"Pray, madam," asked he, "for whom are you in mourning?"

The tears with which Henrietta had long been struggling, could be checked no longer, and her voice faltered, as she answered, "For Mrs. Courtenay: you know she was my kind, dear friend!"

"I know," returned her husband, "that she was Lord Norbourne's daughter. Are you aware that I have, for a week past, been in the opposition? But I own it is too much to expect that women should understand these matters."

"But what," asked Lady Marchmont, "has at to do with my wearing black?"

"I thought," replied his lordship, "that your reasons would be beyond your comprehension; I will, however, endeavour to adapt them to your understanding. Your wearing mourning for Lord Norbourne's daughter, is an external evidence of alliance between us; now, I am completely opposed to him. I hold his principles, which are those of the Walpole party, to be injurious to the rights which, as freeborn Briton, I am bound to maintain. I expect that you will wear coloured ribands to-morrow!"

"I am not going out," replied Henrietta.

"I insist upon it that you do. The prince has sent us an invitation, and it was his royal highness who first drew my attention to your congruous costume, by asking, 'for whom are you in mourning?'"

"Your will, my Lord, shall be obeyed!" replied Henrietta, almost involuntarily mimicking his solemn tone; "but do you know at Prince Frederick makes very strong love to me? Are you jealous?"

"I could not pay myself so bad a compliment," returned her husband, looking towards the mirror: "it is only acknowledging my merit, to admire my wife; but Lady Marchmont can never forget to whom she belongs!"

"It would be very difficult," thought Henrietta; but she kept her thoughts to herself, while his lordship, satisfied with this display of eloquent authority, was employed in perming his handkerchief afresh. "I promise you," said she, after a pause of some minutes,

"to wear the last new dress you gave me, it is a triumph of taste!"

Lord Marchmont bowed, and appropriated the compliment as if the taste had been his own, not the milliner's.

"And now," continued his wife, "I have a petition to offer."

"When beauty pleads, how can she plead in vain?"

was his lordship's gallant reply.

"You know Miss Churchill? you used to admire her complexion so much. Well, her very foolish grandmother has mixed herself up in some nonsensical correspondence with the court of St. Germain; or, rather, has let herself be made a tool by Mr. Trevanion, who, I am happy to say, is not Ethel's husband; they arrested him just in time. However, the poor old lady is in great distress; she and her granddaughter are coming up to London, and I wish to give them all possible countenance and assistance. May I ask them to stay here? I am so glad that you are in the opposition!"

"I always," replied Lord Marchmont, after a long pause, during which he vouchsafed not the slightest attention to the earnest and imploring looks of his wife, "have considered women to be superlatively foolish; but so glaring an instance of their folly never before came under my own personal knowledge! Because I am opposed to Sir Robert on some questions, is it immediately to be supposed that I am about to give up my country, my king, and my God?"

"Why, who ever asked you to do any thing of the sort?" ejaculated Henrietta, in utter dismay.

"You did, madam, when you ventured to suppose that I would make my house the rendezvous of conspirators and Jacobins!"

"I did but ask your protection," returned Lady Marchmont, "for a weak old woman, and a friendless young one!"

"Both very dangerous!" replied his lordship: "you may wish to see my head fall on a scaffold! I cannot join in your desire, and I must point your attention to the extreme ingratitude of your proceeding: I believe that you might go through London, and find your house and equipage unequalled; why you should, therefore, wish to engage me in plots and dangers, completely baffles even my penetration!"

"These things never entered my head!" exclaimed Lady Marchmont.

"You see how limited is your foresight: it is fortunate that you are connected with one who looks a little more into the consequences of actions than yourself!" replied he, with a self-complacent smile.

"Well, well," returned she, "I withdraw my request: I was wrong in making it. Wrong," thought she to herself, "in hoping that you could have one kind and generous feeling!"

"I rarely fail to convince!" said Lord Marchmont, rising: "I believe that we have no further occasion to trespass on each other's time. The morning is the most valuable portion of the day, properly applied. I wish

however, to give you one piece of advice before I leave: have I your permission?"

Henrietta bowed a polite assent.

"Allow me," continued Lord Marchmont, "to enter my protest against your passion for forming female friendships. They are generally useless—often inconvenient. Your friendship with Mrs. Courtenaye induced you to wear mourning, to the great hazard of my political consistency."

"He has only been in the opposition a week!" thought his wife.

"Your friendship for Miss Churchill has induced you to wish that I should lend the sanction of my countenance to traitors and Jacobins. I beg that, for the future, you will follow my example—I have no intimate friends!"

"I should very much wonder if you had!" muttered the countess, as the door closed on the slow and stately exit of her husband.

CHAPTER LIX.

AN ACT OF PARLIAMENT.

Love is a thing of frail and delicate growth;
Soon check'd, soon foster'd! feeble, and yet strong:
It will endure much, suffer long, and bear
What would weigh down an angel's wing to earth,
And yet mount heavenward; but not the less
It dieth of a word, a look, a thought;
And when it dies, it dies without a sign
To tell how fair it was in happier hours:
It leaves behind reproaches and regrets,
And bitterness within affection's well,
For which there is no healing.

LADY MARCHMONT rose from her seat, and unfastened the riband, less black than the hair that it bound.

"So my poor Constance," said she, "I am not permitted even this memorial of her; and even Ethel I cannot serve. Of what avail," and her eyes wandered mechanically round, "is all the luxury by which I am surrounded, if it serve only as a barrier to all kindly feelings?"

Never had Lady Marchmont felt so lonely. Disdain for her husband was mingled with the bitterness of restraint; restraint, too, where her own heart told her she was right. There never was a finer nor a higher nature than Henrietta's: she was completely carried away by impulse; but then her impulses were all generous and lofty. She was enthusiastic, and keenly susceptible; a word, a look, would send the blush to her cheek, and the light to her eye: she was eager in whatever she undertook, and yet soon and easily discouraged: she was proud, and hence impatient of authority; but kindness could have done any thing with her. She needed to love, and to be beloved; her heart was full of warmth and emotion, to which some object was a sweet necessity. The destiny of one like Henrietta is made by the affections; these repressed or disgusted, checked the growth of all good, and the life that she was now leading was

calculated to do any thing but foster any more lofty or kindly feeling.

Unbroken worldly prosperity has a natural tendency to harden the sympathies: when life comes so easily to ourselves, it is difficult to fancy it going hardly with others. Without any permanent object for exertion of any kind, we are apt soon to sink into habits of indolent indulgence, and such are inevitably selfish. Vanity was Lady Marchmont's chief stimulus in the absence of a better one; and vanity is like a creeping plant, which begins by turning its lithe foliage round a single window, and ends by covering the whole edifice: but Henrietta was a difficult person to spoil, it would take many bitter lessons from experience before her passionate feelings could become cold and hardened. Her discontent at this moment was of no selfish order, but her tears fell heavily as she dwelt on the unkindness of not offering the aid that could have been so easily extended to her first and earliest friend. There is not a more bitter pang than that which accompanies the desire to befriend, and the inability of so doing.

At this moment the door of the closet opened, and Lady Mary Wortley Montagu was announced. Their first intimacy had more than slackened, still a very decent appearance of civility was preserved. Henrietta had long since discovered that she had been much more grateful for Lady Mary's earlier attentions than was at all needed. This is one of the most unpleasant lessons that experience gives; and one, moreover, that it is perpetually giving; namely, that what we fancied was liking for ourselves, was, in reality, the result of calculation, or of amusement. We fancied we were liked, when we were only useful or entertaining. Moreover, there was that in Lady Mary Wortley's mind, which effectually prevented all sympathy between Henrietta and herself, and sympathy is the basis of all friendship. There was a coarseness in the one which revolted the almost fastidious delicacy of the other; and Lady Marchmont, full of poetry, touched with romance and sentiment, had nothing in common with the harsh and hard worldliness of Lady Mary; still, as they moved in the same circle, they met often, and were almost as polite as if they had never been friendly. Now, few friendships die a natural death, they generally come to a violent end; and it showed no little tact in our rival beauties, that they allowed theirs to grow

"Fine by degrees, and beautifully less."

"I met Lord Marchmont on the staircase," said Lady Mary, "or else I should ask why you are looking so dull."

"I am so disappointed," replied Henrietta, who was young enough in grievances, to be eager to talk about them: "I wanted to ask some friends, who are coming up to London under very disagreeable circumstances, to stay with us, and Lord Marchmont will not hear of it."

"For once," exclaimed her companion, "I

like the husband's side; remember, that my doing, is not to be considered a precedent: then they are in unpleasant circumstances, so less we see of our friends the better!"

"I beg to differ with you," returned Henrietta, colouring.

"You need not look so angry," returned Lady Mary; "at all events, not at me; I am not responsible for the established principles of society; I only stated what they are."

"The more I see of society," interrupted Lady Marchmont, "the more disgusted I am with it!"

"Fortunately for you, it does not return the compliment!" said Lady Mary: "but do send Lord Marchmont again, if you want somebody to quarrel with: a husband is the only legitimate resource on such occasions!"

"What do you say to a lover?" asked Henrietta, laughing.

"O, you quarrel with your lover on his own account, he is not a resource! A lover's quarrel is made up of jealousies, doubts, suspicions, fears, and all sorts of fantastic fancies: matrimonial dispute, on the contrary, is composed of familiar and ordinary matter, a sort of ventilator to the temper!"

"But," said the young countess, "Lord Marchmont and I never quarrel."

"O! returned her ladyship, with a sneer, you are

'Content to dwell in decencies forever!'

"Well, for my part, I should prefer any thing a perpetual calm."

Henrietta only thought how completely she agreed with her.

"It is very odd," continued her visiter, "that quarrels, which are so pleasant in love, could be so odious in marriage. I believe it is, that, in the first instance, they may have consequences; in the last, they have none: our lover may fear to lose you; your husband in only hope, and hope in vain: the lover fears that every quarrel may be the last; the husband knows he may go on quarrelling to eternity!"

"A pleasant prospect!" exclaimed Lady Marchmont.

"Lawgivers were never more mistaken," said Lady Mary, "than when they ordained that the conjugal tie should last through life better and worse; the last injunction being strictly complied with. There should be septennial marriages, as well as septennial parlements!"

"Why, my dear Lady Mary," exclaimed Henrietta, laughing, "do you not represent me of your father's boroughs?"

"Why, indeed!" returned her companion. "I would bring in a bill every session; people want more favours from being tired of refusing, than from any other motive. In life it is irrevocable that is terrible: while there is hope, there is hope. We should keep each

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other in much better order, if, at the end of seven years, there were to be a reckoning of grievances. It would be a good moral lesson to many a husband, to come down on the seventh anniversary and find his tea not made, and his muffin not buttered. These are the things that come home to a man's feelings!"

"And what," asked Henrietta, "if it were the gentleman who was reported missing?"

"Upon my honour cried Lady Mary, "I cannot look on that in any other point of view than as a relief!"

Henrietta did not say how entirely she was of the same way of thinking.

"What is a woman's stronghold? Her coquetry! Now, coquetry cannot exist without uncertainty," continued the fair philosopher, "and a husband is so dreadfully secure! I am myself a coquette on principles, and some of them—not needful now to enumerate—very scientific ones. We have no influence but by our influence over those called our masters; how do we acquire that influence? By flattering a man's vanity, and by playing on his hopes and fears! These are all put *hors de combat* in marriage. We have already flattered to the utmost by our choice, and what is there for a husband to hope or to fear? Were my plan carried into execution, think of the delightful uncertainty of the seventh year!"

"As you cannot make a speech, you must," said Henrietta, "put it into a treatise."

"It is more than half-finished," answered her ladyship, "and I have some thoughts of adding a few notes to my own sex, 'On the best methods of acquiring influence;' all might, however, be condensed into a single word—Love!"

"Which has," exclaimed Lady Marchmont, "the greatest power over ourselves!"

"And there lies our great mistake," replied Lady Mary: "it is the greatest folly to care for a lover, but as they give you influence, and contribute to your vanity: for a woman to love, is turning her arrows on herself!"

"All you say," answered Henrietta, "would be very true, if life were a game of chess, to be played by certain given rules; but think how we are governed by our feelings, and carried away by our impulses. I cannot, nay, would not, lower as you do, the divinity of affection, for all the triumphs in the world! I would rather have been Egeria, beloved in the sweet silence of her shadowy grotto, than the goddess of Beauty, fresh risen from her native waters, with all the gods for her slaves!"

"Good morning, my dear," exclaimed Lady Mary, rising; "I cannot endanger my morals by staying; I may grow romantic too: 'evil communication corrupts good manners.' Well, well, I see Sir George Kingston is the only lover for you, who pleads, as the excuse for his perpetual inconstancy, that no woman appreciates the poetry of his love!"

CHAPTER LX.

MEETING OF OLD FRIENDS.

How much of change lies in a little space !
 How soon the spirits leave their youth behind !
 The early green forsakes the bough ; the flowers,
 Nature's more fairylike and fragile ones,
 Droop on the wayside, and the later leaves
 Have artifice and culture—so the heart :
 How soon its soft spring hours take darker hues !
 And hopes, that were like rainbows, melt in shade ;
 While the fair future, ah ! how fair it seem'd !
 Grows dark and actual.

It was a cold and rainy afternoon as Ethel Churchill sat at the window of their new abode, a house in one of the streets leading from the Strand to the river. It was the day after their arrival, and nothing could well be more gloomy than the view: the pavement was wet, and a yellow mist obscured every object, the passers glided by like phantoms, and the Thames, at the end, seemed dusk and heavy, as if a ray of sunshine had never rested on its waters. The room itself was large and dark, and had that peculiar air of discomfort which belongs to "ready furnished apartments:" every thing looks as if it had been bought at a sale, and there is an equal want of harmony both in the proportions and colours. The idea involuntarily occurs of how the chairs had encircled other hearths; of how, around the tables, had gathered family groups, broken up by the pressure of distress and of want. All the associations are those of poverty; and of all human evils, poverty is the one whose suffering is the most easily understood: even those who have never known it, can comprehend its wretchedness. Hunger, cold, and mortification, the disunion of families; the separation of those the most fondly attached; youth bowed by premature toil; age wasting the little strength yet remaining:—these are the familiar objects which surround poverty.

Ethel did not thus closely examine the causes of the weight upon her spirits; she only knew that the weight was there: she was strange, lonely, unsettled, and she looked forward to nothing. Never had she before felt so forcibly the change that a few months had worked in her; and she was sad when she remembered how young she was, and how little in life remained for her. How delighted she would have been but a very little while before, at the idea of a visit to London! now lassitude and discouragement were her predominant sensations. Ethel found the time hang heavily on her hands, the more heavily for expectation. A note from Lady Marchmont had reached her early in the morning, saying, that she would be with her young friend the very moment Lord Marchmont went out.

"The fact is, my dearest Ethel," so ran the note, "his lordship is terribly afraid of you. He sees the cause of the Stuarts triumphant in your ringlets, and the downfall of the House of Hanover in your complexion. However, as I make a point of having my own way, I

cannot let you be the first exception to the rule; therefore, expect me sometime in the afternoon: I shall, if you please, pass the evening with you, delightful under any circumstances, doubly delightful as an act of disobedience. Ever your affectionate

"HENRIETTA."

Ethel's heart clung to the writer, she was the only creature she knew in this vast city; and, moreover, if ever there was a being formed to win and fascinate, it was Lady Marchmont: a fault in her, was more charming than a merit in another. The very difference in character drew the friends together; different, also, in their styles of beauty, there had never been the shadow of rivalry between them: besides, both were quite young enough to have warmth, confidence, and mirth, those three ingredients of friendship.

The evening closed in, and Ethel began to make preparations for her visitor. She ordered lights, had the curtains closed, and stirred the fire till the room looked quite cheerful in the blaze. Tea was then brought in; and Ethel had scarcely finished drawing two ponderous arm-chairs to each side of the fireplace, when the stopping of a chair in the hall announced Lady Marchmont. Ethel flew to the top of the stairs to meet her; and, in a few moments, each stood by the fire, in all the eagerness of welcome.

Tea was poured out, and each began to tell the other the many events that had taken place since their parting. Much, indeed, had occurred: they parted, girls; they met, women. A deeper meaning was in the face of either than when they sat with the moonlight falling over them beside the little fountain. They looked eagerly on each other, and felt that they were changed: there was as much, perhaps more beauty, but there was less brightness. The mind, more than the heart, gave its impression to the features. The bloom came not at every second word; the cheeks of either was paler; and Ethel's had an appearance of delicate health, very different from the morning bloom that it formerly wore.

There was an habitual sarcasm on Lady Marchmont's finely cut lip, and Ethel's smile had grown into a sad sweetness. On the brow was a deeper shadow—serious and thoughtful. The glad bursts of laughter, the gay fantasies, the buoyant hopes, which they used to meet and share together, were all gone by forever.

The servants removed the tea-things, and they drew nearer to the fire, and to each other. Both had a great deal to say, and yet the conversation languished; but we have all felt this after a long absence: confidence is a habit and requires to be renewed. We have lost the custom of telling every thing; and we begin to fear that what we have to tell is scarcely worth being told. We have formed new acquaintances; we have entered into other amusements; we feel that our tastes are altered; and we require a little while to see the change be mutual. Moreover, the affec-

we are always timid; they require both courage and custom, before they can venture to communicate their regrets. It is a curious, but an undeniable fact, that a meeting, after absence, of old friends, is most always constrained and silent at first; they are surprised to find how little they have heard of what they meant to say. It merely shows, after all, that affection is a habit.

CHAPTER LXI.

REMINISCENCES.

Ah, tell me not that memory
Sheds gladness o'er the past,
What is recall'd by faded flowers,
Save that they did not last?
Were it not better to forget,
Than but remember and regret?

Look back upon your hours of youth—
What were your early years,
But scenes of childish cares and griefs?
And say not childish tears
Were nothing; at that time they were
More than the young heart well could bear.

Go on to ripen years, and look
Upon your sunny spring;
And from the wrecks of former years,
What will your memory bring?
Affections wasted, pleasures fled,
And hopes now number'd with the dead!

"SHUT yourself up—go nowhere!" exclaimed Lady Marchmont: "well, I cannot stop your going mad; but, at all events, I will not aid and abet you in so doing. You are now in town, and a town life you must lead."

"I have," replied Ethel, leaning languidly back in her chair, "neither health nor spirits for gayety."

"A girl of nineteen talking of health and spirits!" interrupted her visitor; "why, you have beauty enough to supply the place of health. However, I have no objection to your adopting *le genre languissant*, it will the less interfere with my own. If you were to come to me starchy and startling, we should not be friends a week."

"O, Henrietta!" exclaimed Ethel, half reproachfully.

"Nay, don't look so serious; or, rather, upon second thoughts, do; for it is singularly becoming to you. It is delightful to think that we shall set each other off. I am dark, assiduous, and have some thoughts of binding my black tresses with myrtle, and letting Sir Godfrey Kneller finish my portrait as Aspasia: you, on the contrary, are soft, fair, with the blue eyes and golden hair of a Madonna. We make always be contrasts, and never be rivals."

"At all events," answered Ethel, "we can never be the last."

"I don't know," said Lady Marchmont; but, at all events, we will be generous about our lovers."

"I neither expect nor wish for any," said her companion.

"Not wish for a lover!" cried Henrietta; I never heard any thing so absurd! or, per-

haps, you would prefer waiting till after you are married?"

"My dear Henrietta," exclaimed Ethel, colouring; and, after a moment's pause, added, "I never wish to hear the name even of a lover again."

"What, my dear, frightened at the narrow escape you had of being married?" replied Lady Marchmont, purposely alluding to the marriage; for she felt that even hinting at Norbourn Courtenaye was treading on too delicate ground. No woman likes to dwell on a subject so mortifying as a faithless lover.

"An escape you may well call it," replied her friend. "O, Henrietta! you do not know what a dreadful thing it is to see yourself on the point of being married to a man you both dislike and despise."

"But why did you consent to marry him?" asked Lady Marchmont, a little conscience-stricken.

"Because I was utterly dispirited and ill: I had not strength to say 'No' to my grandmother, whom I had always been in the habit of obeying."

"They would not have found me so obedient," cried the countess.

"I was rather passive than obedient," replied Ethel; "but the interruption of the ceremony awakened me like a shock. The relief was what I cannot describe: I seemed to awake as if from a lethargy. Thought, resolution, and a belief in my own powers of resistance, appeared to revive suddenly within me. I have seen more, and reflected more, during the last month, than I ever did before in the whole course of my existence."

"Suppose Mr. Trevanion should obtain his pardon, would you still think yourself compelled to marry him?"

"No; though I should certainly not think myself justified in marrying another."

"Well, then," exclaimed Lady Marchmont, "I shall use my utmost influence to get him beheaded, out of the way, as soon as possible. Dear, dear! I am afraid that he would only be hanged; at least, I can endeavour to have him complimented with the axe."

"My dear Henrietta, how can you jest on such serious subjects?"

"On what others would you have me jest?" replied her companion, her beautiful mouth curving with a bitter smile. "The serious things of life are its keenest mockeries. The things set apart for laughter are not half so absurd as those marked out for tears. Ah! if we did but look at life in its true point of view—false, hollow, mocking, and weary as it is!—we should just walk down this very street, and be found floating on the Thames to-morrow."

Ethel watched the sudden change that passed over her companion's face with silent surprise; which when Henrietta observed, she at once resumed her former gayety.

"It is not one of our least absurdities that we never do what we purpose doing. Here we met to-night, on purpose to talk over the

past, and we have done nothing but talk over the future. Ah, I believe that most of us may as well forget the past!"

"Indeed we may," said Ethel; and a deeper shade of sadness passed across her sweet face.

"We have not only," added Lady Marchmont, "forgotten the past, but also the passing present. I hear my chair in the hall; and to keep Lord Marchmont waiting, when he has announced his intention of supping at home, far exceeds my prerogative; so good-night, dearest, you will either see or hear from me to-morrow."

"She is right," murmured Ethel, as, after her guest's departure, she resumed her seat; and, leaning her head on her hand, gave way to the indulgence of a melancholy reverie. "Of what avail is it to dwell upon the past?—I wish I could forget!"

CHAPTER V.

AN INTERVIEW.

Why, life must mock itself to mark how small
Are the distinctions of its various pride;
'Tis strange how we delight in the unreal;
The fanciful and the fantastic make
One-half our triumphs. Not in mighty things—
The glorious offerings of our mind to fate—
Do we ask homage to our vanities,
One-half so much as from the false and vain:
The petty trifles that the social world
Has fancied into grandeur.

WHEN a woman has once made up her mind to be imprudent, she is very imprudent indeed; she is quite ingenious in contriving occasions. Thanks to her age, and the interest of old friends of the family, Mrs. Churchill had escaped without punishment for her amateur treason; and now, whether imboldened by an impunity which she most untruly set down to the account of fear, or whether the late excitement made her present quiet insipid,—it would be difficult to say; but she was in a fret and fever to further prove what she called, her devotion to the House of Stuart.

Lord Marchmont would have expatiated for months to come on his own prudence in refusing admission into his house, could he have heard only a tithe of her daily discourse. Fortunately, two servants she had brought with her, were devotedly attached to their mistress; and the others only entering her apartments at rare intervals, did not understand her mystic allusions; and she now, more than ever, affected to veil her meaning under the mysterious phraseology so much adopted by the Jacobites.

One morning Ethel was surprised by a summons, unusually early, to her grandmother's room. She found her in the greatest bustle: two of the maids unpacking a multitude of trunks; while she walked up and down, now telling them where such a satin *was to be found*, and then reading a letter *which she held in her hand*. As soon as Ethel

came in, she took her hand, and, without speaking, led her to the closet adjoining.

"I have," said she, "most important intelligence to communicate."

Her listener turned pale: could it be possible that Mr Trevanion had come to London?

Mrs. Churchill, however, continued, without noticing her agitation: "I have this morning received an answer from her Grace of Buckingham. She appoints to-day for a private interview. The daughter of a king duly appreciates my humble services to her house."

"My dear madam!" exclaimed Ethel, "do you think it will be quite prudent, under your present circumstances, to visit a person, whose Jacobite predilections are so well known as those of the Dutchess of Buckingham?"

"I am not aware," returned her grandmother, drawing up herself to her full height, "what act you have ever observed in my whole life, that authorizes you to suppose I should allow prudence to interfere with duty? You will be ready to accompany me by twelve o'clock to-day."

Ethel knew that further remonstrance was useless; and, therefore, quietly offered her services to arrange the multitudinous wardrobe which was being unpacked.

Mrs. Churchill, always particular about her dress, was this morning more so than ever. Still, it must be confessed, that when the sad-coloured satin was arranged in rich folds, and the Mechlin lace (it was a little fortune in itself) hung to her satisfaction, she looked as perfect a specimen of an old lady as England could have produced.

The chairs came at the appointed hour, and Ethel could not but be amused at the glimpse she had of the park along which they were carried; although haunted by misgivings as to the judiciousness of their destination. They were set down in a hall of large dimensions, hung round with portraits, and filled with servants, who had more the air of guards. Two attendants marshalled them up-stairs, where they were received by two gentlemen ushers, who conducted them along a spacious gallery into an ante-chamber, where they were received by her grace's chamberlain. He sent in a page, richly dressed; and, after a message, mysteriously whispered in his ear, announced that her grace was ready to receive her guests. Two attendants, in court dresses, flung open the folding-doors of the room in which the dutchess awaited their arrival. It was a long, high chamber: on the one side there were a number of narrow windows, whose curtains of crimson damask swept the floor, and gave a rich and subdued colour to the light that struggled through their massive folds; on the other side were pictures in huge gilded frames, each with a crown on the top; for they were all family portraits of the Stuarts. At the end of the room was a canopy, surmounted by a ducal coronet. Below was a full-length of James II., at whose feet was a sort of throne, on which the dutchess was placed. Six ladies, splendidly attired, were

on either side, all standing; indeed, an arm-chair, placed near the throne, was the only seat to be seen in the room.

The dutchess received them with a gracious inclination of the head; and, after signing to Mrs. Churchill to take the arm-chair, she extended her hand for Ethel to kiss. Silence was then broken by inquiring how Mrs. Churchill bore the fatigue of the journey?

"I never felt it," replied the old lady, who was elated with all the dignity of a martyr; "there are times when the mind forgets the body."

Ethel could not help smiling when she recollected how her grandmother had slept or grumbled the whole journey in her very comfortable carriage.

"We are not ignorant of your devotion," returned the dutchess, with a very solemn air, suddenly checking herself, as if afraid of saying too much. But it is difficult to sustain conversation in such a high and forced tone, and neither party got further than a few stately sentences.

Ethel employed the time in observing the dutchess. She could trace no likeness to the portrait by which she was seated; she was far handsomer, having retained, at least, the traces of her former beauty. She had fine high features: her eyes were rather small, and close to the nose, but bright and piercing; and the general severity of her aspect vanished under the influence of a very pleasant smile. She wore black; and, as the cumbrous drapery fell around her stately figure, contrasting with the dead paleness of her face (she had not worn rouge for years,) there was something about her which gave more the idea of a picture than of a human being.

Apparently both the hostess and guest grew tired of maintaining the dignity of conspiracy; for, suddenly, the dutchess rose and requested Mrs. Churchill's presence in her closet, and left Ethel, much longer than she liked, to be entertained by her ladies in waiting.

The dutchess and Mrs. Churchill had known each other as girls; and it may be doubted whether they had not found some subject of conversation more amusing than even the downfall of the House of Hanover. At last a little page made his appearance, and stated, that Miss Churchill's company was requested by her grace. She followed her little guide through a number of galleries till she found herself in a large bed-chamber, by whose fireplace both Mrs. Churchill and the dutchess were seated.

"I sent for you, my dear," said her grandmother, "that you might be as favoured as myself."

Both ladies rose with a mysterious air: and her grace, first carefully looking round, and then locking her door, touched a spring in the wall. The panel flew back, and discovered a small secret chamber, hung with purple velvet, and lighted by one large lamp.

"It burns night and day," said her grace, entering, followed by her companions. The dutchess then drew a curtain aside, which concealed a portrait of the pretender. She dropped on her knee, and her example was followed by Mrs. Churchill, and also by Ethel, who consoled herself by thinking that if it was an act of treason, she could not help it. Perhaps there was most treason in the interest with which she gazed on the handsome and melancholy countenance of the prince, that wore the expression of sadness peculiar to his fated race.

"It is a hard fate," thought she, "to be exiled from so noble a heritage as England."

On a little stand, in the middle, was a large basket, filled with white roses; the dutchess took one and gave it to her young companion. They left the chamber in silence; and, after seeing that the panel was properly secured,—

"I have got another portrait to show you," said her grace, in a tone from which every thing but deep sadness had vanished: "alas! ours is an ill-fated house!"

They followed her into another chamber, hung with black; and, beneath a sombre canopy, mocked by the ducal coronet above, was the portrait of her son—the young duke recently deceased. He was more like the Stuarts than his mother; but it was a soft, fair likeness. The same sad and sombre expression was united with almost feminine beauty. It was of a kind too fragile for lasting. The large blue eyes seemed full of light; but the lips were feverish, and the rich colour on the cheek, hectic.

"He was my only boy," said the dutchess: and Ethel saw that the curved mouth was tremulous with suppressed emotion; and the eyes filled for a moment with unshed tears. After this, she had not even the inclination to smile at what her grace said was the occupation of her leisure hours. She undrew a curtain, and there were two wax-work figures, arrayed in robes of state, glittering with tissue and embroidery. "They are destined, when finished, for Westminster Abbey," added his mother, with all her former stateliness.

They then adjourned to the reception-room: the dutchess resumed her seat under the canopy; the damsels in waiting ranged themselves on either side; and a page brought in a massive gold salver, with chocolate, seedcake, and canary. The refreshments over, they took their leave, were ushered in great form to their chairs, and arrived in safety at home; Ethel, at all events, completely tired.

But the events of the day were not over. News had arrived in London that Mr. Treva-nion had effected his escape. This, coupled with Mrs. Churchill's indiscreet visit, led to more severe measures. She was placed under confinement, though allowed to remain in her own house, on account of her age; but menaced with a fine, which would, if exacted, bring beggary along with it.

CHAPTER LXIII.

A PROJECT.

The sun was setting o'er the sea,
A beautiful and summer sun;
Crimson and bright, as if not night,
But rather day had just begun:
That lighted sky, that lighted sea,
They spoke of Love and Hope to me.

I thought how Love, I thought how Hope,
O'er the horizon of my heart
Had pour'd their light like yonder sun;
Like yon sun, only to depart:
Alas! that ever suns should set,
Or Hope grow cold, or Love forget!

"I SEE no remedy!" exclaimed Henrietta, who had hurried to Ethel on the first intelligence of this new misfortune, "but a direct application to Sir Robert Walpole. I have tried every method to induce Lord Marchmont to exert himself, but in vain. I have reasoned, flattered, even cried; but all of no use. But for a husband, one should never know how disagreeable people can be."

"Hush, my dearest Henrietta!" exclaimed Ethel.

"Ah! it is of no use finding fault with what I say; it is the truth."

"Which," interrupted her friend, "is not to be spoken at all times."

"Well, well," replied Henrietta, half-laughing, "have your own way; which, by-the-by, is what you quiet people always contrive to get in some way or other."

"I have so much of my own way," replied Ethel, with a smile.

"Only with me," returned the other, laughing; "and, as it is a luxury, you make the most of it. But I'll tell you what my plan is: I shall take you, to-morrow, to Chelsea, and see if we cannot obtain an interview with Sir Robert himself, and then you can plead your own cause."

"But what could I say?" exclaimed Ethel, turning pale at the bare mention of such a scheme.

"Say! why, my dear, you need only look!" cried Henrietta; "not but what you may very well find plenty to say. You can tell him that your grandmother is just a silly old lady, who will never do any one any harm but herself. You can also ask him to behead Mr. Trevanion if ever he sets foot in England again."

"Will you never be serious?" interrupted her listener.

"I am too sad to be serious?" replied Lady Marchmont: "do you know what that mood is when you would rather dwell upon any thing but your own thoughts? I am always the most seemingly lively when I am the least so in reality; and I talk nonsense when I have not courage to talk sense. I make a noise, like children, because I am frightened at finding myself in the dark—that worst of darkness, the darkness of the heart."

"This from you!" exclaimed Ethel; "you, the brilliant, the flattered—"

"All very true," interrupted Henrietta; "but not the happy. Nature and fortune are

at variance with me: the one meant me to be much better than I actually am. Every day I see more clearly the worthlessness and the vacancy of the life that I lead: my heart is chilled and hardened, and my mind frets itself. It is a dreadful feeling that of knowing you are not loved as you could love, and as you deserve to be loved; to know that all your highest and best qualities—"

"It is a dreadful thing," replied Ethel, with a shudder that she could not repress: her heart had gone back to its own early dream, and dwelt the more heavily on its present desolation.

Real feeling is shy of expression; and neither of the friends had courage to speak of what was nearest the heart of either. Henrietta did not like to talk of Lord Marchmont, and to own how utterly she had been mistaken in believing that rank and wealth sufficed to make a happy marriage: she shamed to say how she craved for affection and sympathy. Ethel, on her part, was equally reluctant to speak of Norbourn Courtenaye; and this silence was aided by Henrietta, who, from a feeling of delicacy, did not like to speak of Constance. How much, even in the most confidential intercourse, is kept back! the dearest of friends know each other but little.

"But," continued Lady Marchmont, "let us speak seriously of my project; believe me, it is a good one. There, you need not say we think all projects good that originate in ourselves, I have said it for you."

"I really," exclaimed Ethel, "was not going to say any thing of the kind."

"Well, it is something to be prepared: it is what you must be to-morrow."

"But what possible influence can I have with Sir Robert?"

"O, a pretty woman always has influence; and they say that the all-powerful minister is as open to the charms of a pair of *beaux yeux* as any one."

"I shall feel so frightened, and so silly!"

"Never mind the last; only, instead of fear, have hope. Sir Robert is a widower, who knows what effect you may produce?"

"I have no ambition for such a conquest."

"That is because you are not yet come to a full use of your understanding. Universal conquest should be the motto of our sex. Every woman should try to make every man she sees in love with her."

"And what is she to do with all these lovers when she has them?"

"Why, not much; it is not every person who can be made useful: still, there they are if you want them. To make a man in love with you gives an instant hold on his vanity; and with that, you can do any thing. Vanity is the real lever with which Archimedes said he could move the earth; so, try what you can effect with Sir Robert."

"I fear that will not be much," replied Ethel, with a disconsolate air.

"At all events, look your very best; and I shall call for you about twelve. Remember, the most perfect toilet; men do not understand

dress, but they appreciate the hall go to bed, and dream all in prime minister instead of Sir

or no answer, but left Ethel all tation; which, however, merged tion that, though she might not any thing for her grandmother, ight to try her utmost; and she ifidence in her friend. Henrietta, ns of active mind and lively ima-rcised great influence over all t was difficult to resist both her her kindness; the one carried th her, the other made it quite t to be so carried.

CHAPTER LXIV.

HANGES IN LONDON.

nce of perpetual change
in the earth;
only as the soil
as to-morrow birth.

nd the tower, there grows the weed;
todd the weed, the tower:
t hour its likeness leaves
uture hour.

perial city built
he eastern plains
aste of tomb and sand
it now remains.

ir city fill'd with life,
a future day,
er, and might, and majesty,
have pass'd away.

ould be more bright than the fol-
ing, it was the first day of sun-
hel had seen since her arrival in
she was surprised to observe the
t wrought. The river below her
ne with that deep, dead clearness,
that resembles molten lead; the
ided rapidly past; and more than
to some popular old tune, came
ermen as they rowed past. The
a small vessel seemed like snow,
ould be more graceful than the
they glided through the arches
bridge—disappeared—and then
e recognised in the bend of the
. The noble dome of St. Paul's
d in the golden atmosphere, and
the inferior churches glittered

dered what had become of the
struck her so forcibly on her

In the direction to which her
inted, the aspect was even more
ie banks of the Thames had gar-
red with the buildings, and the
vas of a lighter character, while
old abbey rose like a queen amid
'nless we except the Tiber, there
rich has so much history about
ames, and which is so strongly
th the characteristics of its na-
are the signs of that commercial

activity which has carried the flag of England
round the world; there is that cleaving to the
past, which has preserved those stately
churches inviolate—the glorious receptacles
of the dead—and there, too, is evidence of that
domestic spirit which goes back upon itself
for enjoyment, and garners up its best hopes
in a little space. England may be deficient
in public gardens, but where are there so many
private ones, each the delight of their mas-
ter, and the household that have planted their
shrubs, and watered their flowers? What
little words of affection and comfort are bound-
ed by the neat quickset hedge, quiet and still
as the nest of some singing-bird!

Ethel was in that sensitive state of mind
and body, which is especially subject to ex-
ternal influences, and she began her toilet with
a cheerfulness that had its origin in the sun
shining in at the window. What children we
are in trifles! what slight things exercise an
influence over us! to how much that our rea-
son would be ashamed to acknowledge!
nevertheless does it submit. Our whole nature
must change; we must be less susceptible,
less dependent on "blind accident," before
we can shake off hopes and fears, which are
almost superstitions.

For a wonder, two ladies were actually
punctual to an appointment: Lady March-
mont was to her time, and Ethel did not keep
her waiting a moment. A woman's first look
is at the dress of her friend, and her second
word is of it. Each was exceedingly satisfied
with the other: which is also saying, that they
were exceedingly satisfied with themselves.
Lady Marchmont had on a rich flowered da-
mask, and a white chip hat tied down with a
pink kerchief; and never had she looked hand-
somer, for she was one whose variable com-
plexion and mobile features were made to ex-
press interest and excitement. Ethel was in
mourning: they had judged it the most fitting
habit for a petitioner; it was certainly one
most becoming to the wearer. The black set
off the pure white skin and the gloss of the
golden hair, and it suited the pensive and sub-
dued expression that had become habitual to
Ethel's sweet countenance.

A drive to Chelsea was a very different
thing in those days to what it is in ours; it was
then literally going out of town, and the huge
coach-and-six made its stately way beneath
old trees, and through green and shady lanes.
I cannot say much for the cheerfulness of
Chelsea now-a-days: it would seem as if past
gayety always flung a deeper shadow over the
places where it held sway. The large old
houses, darkened with many years, have a
gloomy appearance; and the chances of the
present day are, that they have transmigrated
into boarding-schools and mad-houses. No
vestige remains of that luxuriant growth of
almond-trees, for which it was formerly cele-
brated. There is something peculiarly lovely
in the almond blossom; it brings the warmth
of the rose on the last cold airs of winter, a
rich and glowing wreath, when all beside is
desolate: so frail, too, and so delicate, like a

fairly emblem of those sweet and gentle virtues whose existence is first known in an hour of adversity. High brick walls stand where once stood that rosy and graceful tree; and if there be one object more dreary than another, it is a high, blank brick wall; as little vestige is there left of the wide-spread common.

Small houses have sprung up as rapidly as the summer grasses used to spring in the Five Fields, so notorious for robbery and murder, that even Madame de Genlis, not usually very accurate in her English *locale*, is perfectly right in making them the scene of a robber's attack.

"Troy now stands where grass once grew," to take the liberty of reversing a quotation, and Belgrave Square has effaced the terrors of "The Five Fields;" but the road to Sir Robert Walpole's lay more to the right; yet so much are places brought together, and distances shortened now-a-days, that a visit to Chelsea was about what a visit to Richmond would be now. It was a very pleasant morning, the clear blue sky was only broken by large white clouds, whose contrast deepened the azure into purple. The trees lay on one side the road in a rich depth of shadow; on the other the golden light seemed to rain through the checkered boughs: a subtle fragrance floated on the air, and the carols of a thousand birds rose distinct above the deep murmur of the city that they had left behind.

"I cannot help," said Ethel, "feeling in better spirits: it seems absolute ingratitude not to enjoy so lovely a morning!"

"I shall consider them as an omen," replied Lady Marchmont: "it is very becoming to be in good spirits, and I want you to look your best. Really you ought to keep a relay of tenth cousins to die off, for black suits you remarkably well. We shall be such good contrasts; I am glad that I have left off my mourning!"

"Your mourning!" exclaimed Ethel; "I was not aware that you had been wearing it, Who was it for?"

Lady Marchmont coloured, both with embarrassment and self-reproach. Embarrassment; for, with an intuitive delicacy, she had shrunk from ever naming Mrs. Courtenaye to Ethel; and, with self-reproach, that, in a moment's carelessness, she could have so lightly alluded to such a painful subject. Perhaps it was best to tell Ethel at once: if ever she went into society at all, she would inevitably hear of it, and her own concealment would have the appearance of a dissimulation,—the furthest from her thoughts. Yes, it was best to tell Ethel at once.

"I have not," said Lady Marchmont, "told you of the friendship that existed between Mrs. Courtenaye and myself, for I felt that the subject must be a painful one to you."

How painful, the deadly paleness that overspread Ethel's face, sufficiently told. Henrietta would not observe it, but went on with her story, thus giving her friend time to recover; and, before it was done, both were *mingling their tears together*.

"I have avoided the subject myself," said Ethel at last, in a faltering tone; "even now it is most painful to say what I think of Mr. Norbourn's conduct: it was too cruel!"

"Do not," interrupted Henrietta, "expect the shadow of an excuse from me. It was the resentment that I felt towards himself that, singularly enough, led to my acquaintance with his wife: and I say it, even to yourself, that if ever there was an angel upon earth, it was Constance Courtenaye."

"What a strange thing it is for affection to change!" said Ethel: "even now I cannot comprehend inconstancy in love."

"I do not think," returned Henrietta, "that there was any inconstancy in the case: we must look to more wordly motives. Constance was a creature that grew upon your love, but no rival to yourself. I take it for granted that the Courtenaye property was involved, and that its heir had no means of freeing himself but by a marriage with his cousin."

"He must have known that before he knew me," said Ethel, coldly.

"I am not," exclaimed Lady Marchmont, "seeking to defend conduct as heartless as it was cruel. Your youth, your ignorance of the world, your touching confidence in himself, should have made your happiness too sacred for a moment's trifling. But we live in a hard and unkind world, and every hour I see some new proof of how little we regard the feelings of each other; and strange it is, that the deepest injuries are those that are the most lightly judged. The strong hand of the law is around your life and your wealth, but he who takes from you all that renders them valuable, the chances are, that his offence will find palliation and excuse; nay, that the laughers will be on his side. The heart is left alone in its desolation!"

CHAPTER LXV.

SIR ROBERT WALPOLE AND HOUSE.

This is the charm of poetry: it comes
On sad perturbed moments; and its thoughts,
Like pearls amid the troubled waters, gleam.
That which we garner'd in our eager youth,
Becomes a long delight in after years:
The mind is strengthen'd, and the heart refresh'd
By some old memory of gifted words,
That bring sweet feelings, answering to our own,
Or dreams that waken some more lofty mood
Than dwell with the commonplace of life.

THE two friends were roused from the sad and subdued mood into which they had gradually sank, by the sudden stoppage of the carriage at the entrance to Sir Robert Walpole's house. The arrival took them by surprise: Ethel, who had quite lost the passing cheerfulness of the morning, turned yet pale, but Lady Marchmont was at once aroused by the excitement of the coming interview; as she afterwards said, laughing, she felt what her beauty owed to itself!

"I have a friend at court," whispered she to her companion: "last night I singled out one of Sir Robert's secretaries, and a few

smiles made him my devoted chevalier, and he promised to insure an interview."

So saying, she gave a small billet to one of the servants; and almost before they had time to look at each other, and to see that neither ringlet nor riband were displaced by their long drive, down came the young secretary. He handed them from the carriage with an air of devoted gallantry, and led them to a small breakfast-room, which overlooked the garden.

"Here," said he, "I must leave you, while I ascertain whether Sir Robert will not be too proud to receive the loveliest lady in England!"

"Now, honour and glory to *la haute science de la coquetterie*! My rank, though I own that it is a very pretty thing to be a countess, would have done nothing for me in this case; my wealth, no more; for, despite of the opposition, I do not think Sir Robert would have allowed me to offer a pair of diamond ear-rings, even with his favourite daughter in the background; but I flung myself on a woman's best prerogative, and *mes beaux yeux* have settled the matter at once for me. Ethel, why don't you thank me for having made such good use of them?"

Pale and agitated, Ethel could scarcely force a smile; and to divert her attention from the dreaded interview, Lady Marchmont began to notice the objects around them. The window opened towards a most lovely garden, whose smooth turf and gorgeous parterres swept down to the river. A peacock stood on the grass lawn, his brilliant plumage expanded in the sunshine, while every movement showed some change of colour. Beyond, as if to show the infinite variety of beauty, floated two swans; they were coming to shore, in the full glory of their arching necks and snowy wings. No marvel that the ancient Greeks, who never lost an image of loveliness, linked them to the chariot of the Queen of Beauty!

"A swan," said Lady Marchmont, "always gives the idea of a court-lady,—stately in her grace, ruffling in her bravery, and conscious of the floating plumes that mark her pretensions. The peacock is a coquette; it turns in the sunshine, it looks round as if to ask the conscious air of its purple and gold; but the swan sails on in majestic tranquillity, it sees the fair image of its perfect grace on the waters below, and is content:

"It seeks not the applause of vulgar eyes."

"And which of these," asked Ethel, "do you consider to be your prototype?"

"O, a happy mixture of both!" returned the young countess, laughing: "it is the greatest mistake possible, to be always the same; I appeal to the high authority of Pope:—

"Ladies, like tulips, in the sunshine show,
Tie to variety their charms they owe!"

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The swan is a particularly well-bred bird, it has a proper court and reception manner; but there are times when you may well permit yourself the airs and graces of the peacock. Indeed, I think a very pretty system of ornithology might be got up for the use of our sex; you, for example, have taken your lessons of the dove!"

"Thank you!" returned her companion.

"You would say to your lover,

"I disdain
All pomp when thou art by: far be the noise
Of kings and courts from us, whose gentle souls
Our kindly stars have steer'd another way.
Free as the forest-doves, we'll pair together,
Flee to the arbours, grots, and flowery meads,
And in soft murmurs interchange our souls;
Together drink the crystal of the stream,
Or taste the yellow fruit which autumn brings
And when the golden evening calls us home,
Wing to our downy nest, and sleep till morn."

"I do not believe I should say any thing," replied Ethel; "I am naturally silent."

"Well," exclaimed Lady Marchmont, "there is a great deal to be urged in favour of a woman's silence; still,

"Speech is morning to the mind;
It spreads the beautiful images abroad,
Which else lie fur'd and clouded in the soul."

I do not know the reason," continued Henrietta, "but whenever I am very anxious about any thing, and I am, indeed, anxious now, my memory, by way of passing the time, always seems to fill with what were its earliest delights. How well I remember the old dark-looking volumes, from which my uncle used to evoke such beautiful creation! How real they then seemed to be! How devoutly I believed in these ethereal creations! Love, hope, and happiness, then appeared to me actual existences. Alas! as Lady Mary says, 'To my extreme mortification, I grow wiser every day!'"

"I do not know," said Ethel, with a deep sigh, "whether I am wiser, but I am not happier than I used to be; I am not so happy!"

"The future owes you recompense," answered her companion; "at all events, there is a great deal of pleasure before you, if you come out as a beauty and an heiress: I trust that Sir Robert will decree that you shall be set in gold!"

"Let him give my poor old grandmother liberty, and I care for nothing else!"

"Well," cried Henrietta, "do not look so pale and wo-begone about it,

"As some fair tulip, by a storm oppress'd,
Shrinks up, and folds its silken arms to rest;
And, bending to the blast all pale and dead,
Hears from within the winds sing round its nest.
So shrouded up, your beauty disappears;
Unwell, my love! and lay aside your fears."

At that very moment the door opened, and the young secretary announced that Sir Robert Walpole would be happy to receive them.

CHAPTER LXVI.

THE INTERVIEW.

"Go see Sir Robert!
P.—See Sir Robert! hum—
 And never laugh, for all my life to come!
 Seen him I have, but in his happier hour
 Of social pleasure ill exchanged for power;
 Seen him encumber'd with a venal tribe,
 Smile without art, and win without a bribe.
 Would he oblige me? Let me only find
 He does not think me what he thinks mankind.
 Come, come! at all I laugh he laughs, no doubt;
 The only difference is, I dare laugh out!"—*Fora.*

It was a small, but luxurious room, the open windows of which looked to a garden sloping down to the river, clear and sunny, as if the metropolis had been an hundred miles away. Pots, crowded with rare and fragrant exotics, were on the terrace, and filled the apartment with their odours, and the walls around were hung with some of the choicest productions of the Italian school of art: the eye could not be raised but it must look on a flower or a picture. In the midst stood a table, covered with papers tied up with red tape, books of accounts, and open letters. At one end, that facing the window, sat England's all-powerful minister, wrapped in a loose morning-gown of purple cloth. He was a man of large size, in an indolent attitude, and with that flushed complexion which usually accompanies excess. At the first glance, you only saw one who appeared the idle and good-humoured voluptuary, whose chief attention was given to decide on the merit of rival clarets, and whose chief care was to ward off an attack of the gout. Not such was the impression produced by a second and more scrutinizing look, or when the face before you was lighted by expression. There was decision on the firmly compressed lip, whose subtle smile spoke a world of sarcasm; there was thought on the bold, high forehead, and the mind kindled the depths of those piercing gray eyes.

Sir Robert Walpole was essentially the man of his time: no other minister could have maintained the House of Hanover on its then tottering throne. It was opposed to the principles of the many, and entwined with the picturesque prejudices of none. The two first Georges were not men to either dazzle or to interest a people. They were narrow-minded foreign soldiers, fettered by the small etiquettes of small courts; and looked on their accession to the British throne rather as coming into a large property, than as entering on a high and responsible office.

Sir Robert Walpole saw at once that loyalty and enthusiasm must be put out of the question; the appeal must be made to common sense, and to self-interest. A man with less worldly shrewdness would never have seen how things really stood; a man with less pliability could never have adapted himself to them. It must always be remembered, that his whole administration was one long struggle: he had to maintain his master on the

throne, and himself in the ministry; and this was done by sheer force of talent. He had no alliance among the great nobility on the one hand; and, at all events at first, was no personal favourite with the sovereign on the other; yet he kept his high post through one of the longest and most prosperous administrations that England has ever known. His faults were those of his day, a day singularly deficient in all high moral attributes.

Disbelief in excellence is the worst soil in which the mind can work; we must believe, before we can hope. The political creed, of which expediency is the alpha and the omega, can never know the generous purpose, or the high result. It sees events through a microscope; the detail is accurate, but the magnificent combination, and the glorious distance, are wholly lost. His age looked not beyond to-day; it forgot what it had received from the past, and what it owed to the future. Rochefoucauld says, and most truly, that hypocrisy is the homage that vice pays to virtue; now, in Walpole's time, it was not worth vice's while to pay even the poor homage of hypocrisy. Political virtue was laughed at; or, at best, considered a sort of Utopian dream that no one was bound to realize. Human interest will always mingle with human motive. To this hour, the great science and duty of politics is lowered by the petty leaven of small and personal advantage; still, no one can deny the vast advance that has been made. Our views are loftier, because more general; and individual selfishness is corrected by the knowledge, that good is only to be worked out on a large scale. The many have taken the place of the few; and a great principle gives something of its own strength to the mind that entertains it.

The union of philanthropy and of political science belongs to our own age: every hour the conviction is gaining ground, that happiness should be the object of legislation; and that power is given for responsibility, not for enjoyment. Power is a debt to the people: but as yet we walk with the leading-strings of prejudice, strung to confine the steps, which they never should attempt to guide. Let the child and the nation alike feel their own way; the very stumbles will teach not only caution, but their own strength to recover from them. There is a long path yet before us; but the goal, though distant, is glorious. The time may come, when that intelligence, which is the sunshine of the moral world, will, like the sunshine of the physical world, kindle for all. There will be no tax on the window-lights of the mind. Ignorance, far more than idleness, is the mother of all the vices; and how recent has been the admission, that knowledge should be the portion of all? The destinies of the future lie in judicious education; an education that must be universal, to be beneficial.

The state of the poor in our own country is frightful; and ask any one in the habit of coming in contact with the lower classes, to

this distress mainly attributable? Power will always be the same—the power of the poor. But, in what has evidence originated?—in the neglect of the poor. The poor have been left in a state of wretched ignorance, which looks forward nor back; to them, as averages, the actual moment is every day; they have never been humanized by it, nor subdued by culture.

habits of age are hopeless, but how may we be done with the children? Labour, real labour, is, in some shape or other, the portion of mankind; but there is that has not its moments of mental rest, if it but know how to use them. The children of the poor that portion of life which will enable them to know their resources; which will cultivate in them an onward-looking hope, and give them amusement in their leisure hours: this only, will work out that moral reform, which is the legislator's noblest duty.

One great evil of highly civilized nations, the immense distance between the rich and the poor; it leads, on either side, to selfishness. Where we know our own care little; but the fact once admitted there can be neither politically nor morally good which is not universal, that we form for a time, or for a class, but for the whole, and our very interests will together in one wide bond of sympathy. Change, and, I believe, improvement, is the moment going on in the world; but it is not going out its great and best part; it is even more moral than political, and the one inevitably leads to the other. No man can be permitted to the few; rights and privileges were sent for all: but the few at the fountainhead in Sir Robert Walpole. It is but justice to him to note that he was in its advance. Nothing more enlightened than the encouragement given to our manufactures and colonies, also, at his steady preservation; what rest and what prosperity he gave to England. The great want of his administration was, as we have said before, the high principle: it was the ideal of sense, but it was nothing more. Now, common sense never does any thing; the noblest works of our nature, its exercises, need some diviner promptings: the best efforts of humanity belong to the future; but Sir Robert's was not the age of reform. The revolution, and the exile quarters, seemed to have exhausted that mind and that poetry, which are essentially characteristics of English history: the picturesque, and the romantic, set aside for a time to awaken into the open, and more general enthusiasm of sentiment. The best proof of their exalting is among us is, that we believe and here our grandfathers ridiculed and

But we are keeping the fair petitioning; a fault Sir Robert himself would not have committed.

CHAPTER LXVII.

AN AUDIENCE.

Not with the world to teach us, may we learn
The spirit's noblest lessons. Hope and faith
Are stars that shine amid the far-off heavens,
Dimm'd and obscured by vapours from below;
Impatient selfishness, and shrewd distrust,
Are taught us in the common ways of life;
Dust is beneath our feet, and at our side
The coarse and mean, the false and the unjust;
And constant contact makes us grow too like
The things we daily struggle with and scorn:
Only by looking up, can we see heaven.

SIR ROBERT gave one quick scrutinizing glance as his fair guests entered, which was succeeded by the prolonged look of extreme admiration; he called up his most courteous manner as he pointed to the seats nearest to his own.

"I never," said he, "wished my gout with my enemies so cordially as I do at this moment."

"Nay," replied Lady Marchmont, "I cannot help feeling obliged to it; at all events, you cannot seek safety in flight. We have stormed your stronghold, and you must yield yourself our prisoner, rescue or no rescue!"

"Not so bad as that, either," exclaimed Walpole; "I would not fly, if I could:

'Old as I am, for ladies' love unfit,
The power of beauty I remember yet!'"

"I trust," returned Henrietta, with a glance at the silent and confused Ethel, "that we shall find you a very slave to its influence."

Sir Robert smiled, and then said, in a good-humoured tone, "Well, now, fair ladies, what do you want with me? for, I suppose, you are no exceptions to the general rule; no one ever comes to me who does not want something."

"Well," replied the young countess, "you would not have us unlike everybody else in the world?"

"That is what you already are!" said the minister, with an air of great gallantry.

"To be frank," continued Lady Marchmont, having first appropriated the compliment with a very sweet smile, "we do come to ask a favour!"

"Now, the Lord have mercy upon me!" exclaimed Sir Robert, sinking back in his chair; "there is nothing in the world so unreasonable as a pretty woman. Well, let me hear what outrageous proposition is about to come from two at once!" and he half hummed through his teeth the air then in its zenith of popularity:—

"How happy could I be with either,
Were I other dear charmer away!"

"Nay," said Lady Marchmont, "we trust that our petition will not be so very outrageous, either. But, will you allow me to introduce my companion, Miss Churchill?"

Sir Robert's brow darkened at once; but there was something in Ethel's pale and subdued loveliness, which softened him; for he asked, in a very kind tone, "And what does Miss Churchill want with me?"

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"Pity and pardon?" exclaimed Ethel, in a low, but distinct whisper.

"I thought how it was," cried Walpole, "those fantastic coxcombs have all the luck with you. Here is a goose—by Jove! I am calumniating that respectable bird: Trevanion has not even the brains of a goose—an idiot tries to unsettle a whole kingdom, does contrive to turn the heads of some worthy people, and here are two of the prettiest women in England coming to beg for his head, as if it were worth keeping on his shoulders!"

"You are quite wrong," interrupted Lady Marchmont; "as far as Mr. Trevanion is concerned, you have our full permission to hang him out of the way at your earliest convenience!"

"You only say this," returned Sir Robert, fixing a penetrating glance on Ethel, to whose cheek the colour rose vividly, "because you know he has escaped! The jailor was fool enough to have a daughter, and she was fool enough to think, because a man was handsome, he ought not to be hanged; so they took advantage of a dark night, and a smuggler's boat, and are gone to France and the devil together! Don't faint, at least, not here!" added he abruptly, to Ethel, whose fading blush left her paler than before: "your lover is not more inconstant than all men are: but I see how it is; women are all alike, they would rather have a lover hanged, than that another should save him from the gallows!"

A quick temper feeds on its own indulgence, and Sir Robert had talked himself into being angry; however, Lady Marchmont took advantage of the pause to say, "Mr. Trevanion has nothing to do with our visit; it is on Mrs. Churchill's account that we have ventured to address you. We have heard that she is to be imprisoned: it is for her sake that we implore your compassion!"

"My grandmother," exclaimed Ethel eagerly, "pines for her own home: I am sure a prison will kill her. Consider, sir, she is an old woman, she will not trouble you long!"

"An old woman!" exclaimed the minister, whom an unlucky twinge made at that moment doubly impatient, "old women are the plague of my life! So I am to send Mrs. Churchill down to the very spot where a treasonable correspondence is most easily managed; and by the ease with which she gets out of a first scrape, give her all possible encouragement to get into another. Well, I was quite right in asking what preposterous request had you come here about!"

"I see," returned Lady Marchmont, "that old women are no favourites of yours; but if you would extend your clemency to Mrs. Churchill, I think she has seen her folly, and will leave conspiracies to themselves in future."

"And who," asked Sir Robert, "will become sureties for her future good conduct?"

This appeared an easy question to answer; and from the early friends of their house, Ethel selected two neighbouring gentlemen, to whom she had always been accustomed to

look with the utmost respect. She could scarcely have made a worse selection, for they were two most notorious Jacobites. The moment Sir Robert heard the names, "Really, this is too bad!" exclaimed he, in a rage, ringing a bell violently that stood by him on the table: "ladies, I can waste no time in listening to any such nonsense. Good morning!"

There was no resource, the minister would not even look towards them, so absorbed had he suddenly become in the papers before him. The door opened; and, in another moment, they found themselves in the vestibule, where the young secretary was waiting to hand them to the carriage. He was too accustomed to discontented suitors not to see at a glance that the interview had been one of disappointment, and he was too discreet to ask any questions; a discretion, by-the-by, of all kinds the rarest.

CHAPTER LXVIII.

A FRIEND AT COURT.

I did not know till she was lost,
How much she was beloved;
She knows it in that better world,
To which she is removed.

I feel as she had only sought
Again her native skies;
I look upon the heavens, and seem
To meet her angel eyes.

Pity, and love, and gentle thoughts,
For her sake, fill my mind;
They are the only part of her
That now is left behind.

THE disappointed petitioners stood, for a few moments, on the terrace while waiting for their carriage: they stood in complete silence; Ethel the most vexed, Lady Marchmont the most surprised. Henrietta felt like a dethroned divinity, refusal and rebuff were such very novel things to her, excepting from her husband; and from husbands they come as matters of course. But she was a petted, spoiled beauty; and to be dismissed in such an unceremonious manner was beyond her comprehension: she no longer wondered that Lord Marchmont was in opposition. As for Ethel, she was quite bewildered: she had felt such implicit reliance on Henrietta's success, that the disappointment was doubly bitter, because wholly unexpected.

They had stood both so completely absorbed in their disagreeable reverie, that neither perceived the approach of a stranger, who was about to pass them with a slight but courteous bow, when he caught sight of Henrietta, and immediately stopped.

"This is an unexpected pleasure!" exclaimed he. "What good fortune blows Lady Marchmont hither?"

"Good fortune, do you call it?" cried Henrietta: "why I can scarcely refrain from venting my rage even upon poor, unoffending you. Good! my lord; don't expect even a civil word from me. It is a very disagreeable thing to agree with one's husband; but

it I move my patches, and become

ay," replied Lord Norbourn, for he was angry, "Sir Robert can have done no merit so severe a sentence. Come, hear your grievance. He has bought picture you wanted, or refused a slip some plant, without which, of course, not exist for an hour?"

"Lord Norbourn," said Henrietta, "business is of a much more serious nature I leave it to your own kindness whether I or not be intruded upon you."

"My Marchmont knows," replied he, "it is no commonplace expression of civility when I say, let me have the happiness of seeing you whether it be in a little or great

equally know that I may take you at word," said Henrietta; "and, as a first step it is her history that I am about to tell you allow me to introduce my young friend Miss Churchill, Lord Norbourn."

It would be difficult to say on which party more of the other produced the greatest

With Ethel there was the one association: this, then was Courtenay's uncle, daughter he had married. The whole scene vividly before her—all her sorrow, suffering. The tears started, but pride checked them: or, rather, pride is no name so sensitive and shrinking feeling which even at compassion for its misery. Very painful to Ethel to seek aid from Lord Norbourn. Had she consulted her own wish, she would have withdrawn at once; but it was a sacred duty to advance her grandfather's cause by every possible means: and, ever, was not the listener in complete ignorance of the agitation he caused by his presence? She little knew how well Lord Norbourn was acquainted with her name; or how large a share he had had in her unhappiness.

Her appearance produced on him an effect which even his calm and polished mind could scarcely conceal. She brought the image of Constance; thus at once filling the spring of his kindest and best feelings. He felt at once what he owed of sympathy to the young and fair creature, whose face wore such obvious trace of suffering—suffering, too, that he had inflicted. His nature was awakened on her behalf; he felt it his duty to serve her, to be kind to her; he felt such service and such kindness were a fitting offering to the memory of his own child. Unconscious of all this, Lady Marchmont was equally surprised and delighted to find what interest Lord Norbourn took in her story. Like all women who seem to have an imperative necessity in their nature for a romantic reason for every thing, she began to think that his lordship had suddenly fallen in love with the beautiful girl to whose welfare he was giving such earnest attention.

"Well," said Lord Norbourn, as Henrietta ended her narrative, "I trust that Lady Marchmont will not be driven to the desperate step of agreeing with her husband, even

in politics. Just walk round the lawn for two or three minutes, and let me try my influence with Sir Robert."

He left them without waiting; and Henrietta, after following him with eyes that looked the most eloquent thanks, turned to her companion, exclaiming,—

"I cannot say much for the success of my first scheme, that you should be the second Lady Walpole; but what do you say to being the third Lady Norbourn? but, I warn you, in the last case we shall be rivals."

The expression of Ethel's face quite checked her vivacity. For the first time it struck Lady Marchmont how much her friend was altered. Ethel had not even heard what she said, so completely was she lost in her own thoughts. She leant against the balustrade of the terrace, her gaze fixed on the river, but seeing it not. The flush of excitement had left her deadly pale; while the blue eyes looked unnaturally large, with a sad, set expression, as if haunted by the perpetual presence of one oppressive thought. Henrietta felt, whose image was present to Ethel: she said nothing; but pressing her companion's arm kindly, drew her onwards, and walked along the terrace in silence. But Henrietta's imagination was too acute and too buoyant not to arrange a whole future during their walk. She reconciled Ethel and Courtenay; she gave Lord Norbourn's consent to their marriage; and was just ending, like a fairy tale, with—"and they lived very happy for the rest of their lives," when Lord Norbourn returned.

"I expect a charming welcome," said he, "for I return successful: Sir Robert relents. I have offered to become security that Mrs. Churchill has done with treasonable correspondence. She will not yet be permitted to return to the manor house: it is too convenient for 'treasons, stratagems,' &c.; and it is as well not to be put in the way of temptation: but she will be allowed perfect liberty in London. Something of a fine is still talked of; but even that, I hope, will be remitted."

"How kind you are!" exclaimed Lady Marchmont; but Ethel found no voice to speak. Lord Norbourn took her hand very kindly, and placed her in the carriage.

"You must allow me," said he, "to call on Mrs. Churchill. I flatter myself I shall be able to convince her that, without compromising her principles, the best thing that she can do will be not to attempt carrying them into practice."

He turned down the very terrace where they had just been walking; and though, certainly, there was as little resemblance as could well be between himself and Lady Marchmont, yet their thoughts flowed in precisely the same channel. Chilled and hardened, as it had been, by constant contact with the world, yet Lord Norbourn's was inherently a high and generous nature. To such, atonement is a necessity and an enjoyment. Ethel's happiness seemed to him like a sad, sweet debt, owing to the memory of his lost Constance.

CHAPTER LXIX.

THE INFLUENCE OF THE DEAD.

Who are the spirits watching by the dead?
Faith, from whose eyes a solemn light is shed;
And Hope, with far-off sunshine on the head.

The influence of the dead is that of heaven;
To it a majesty of power is given,
Working on earth with a diviner leaven.

To them belongs all high and holy thought:
The mind, whose mighty empire they have wrought;
And Grief, whose comfort was by angels brought.

And gentle Pity comes, and brings with her
Those pensive dreams that their own light confer;
While Love stands watching by the sepulchre.

CONFIDENCE is inseparable from human nature. Never was temper so reserved but it has its moments of unbending—moments when the full heart unlocks its secret fountains, and tells of emotions unsuspected, and thoughts hitherto concealed by the guarded brow and practised lip. Now, of all times and places calculated for confidence, there is no time like evening; no place like sitting over the fire.

Much may be said in favour of a long walk on a summer twilight; the heart opens to the soft influences of the lovely hour; but those very influences distract us from ourselves. The eye is caught by the presence of the beautiful: the violets, half hidden in the long grass; a branch of hawthorn, heavy with its fragrant load; a cloud, on which the crimson shadow lingers to the last:—these are too fair to be passed by unnoticed; they take us from our discourse with a half unconscious delight. Moreover, before the calm and subduing aspect of nature, human cares feel their own vanity. The lulling music of leaves, stirred only by the gentle wind, enters into the soul; and the sweet, deep drawn breath brings its own tranquillity. Passionate and present, indeed, must be the despair that resists the harmony of such an hour; but the quiet chamber, and the secluded hearth, have an atmosphere of another kind. The objects around have been seen so often, that they have at last become, as it were, unseen; their familiarity does not carry us out of ourselves, for all their associations are our own. They remind us of nothing in which we were not the principal actors; if they call up the image of a friend, they call up our own also. Not a chair nor a table but has some link with our by-gone hours. Here we read, modifying the thoughts of others with our own; there we write; and how much is implied in that little phrase! how the whole world of inward existence passes before us, while putting only a small portion of it on paper! With how much is every letter combined, whether of business or of affection! The room is filled with the ghosts of departed hours, often unnoticed and unremembered; but, when recalled by some chance circumstance, how vivid, and how distinct do they rise upon the memory!

The chamber in which Lord Norbourne was seated, was especially one of this kind; it had

been his own room for years, and was crowded with all that marked his character and his taste. It was not large, but of unusual height, and fitted up with great costliness. The bookcases were ebony, inlaid with green morocco, and so were the tables, and the curtains were of crimson velvet. They were closely drawn, but you could hear a gentle rain beating against the window panes. There were few pictures, but each a masterpiece. A sunny landscape of Claude Lorraine's, contrasted the stormy darkness of one by Salvator Rosa; while the spiritual loveliness of a "Madonna," by Guido, was opposed to the passionate beauty of a "Fornarini," by Raphael. Only one modern picture was admitted, and that was a likeness of Constance, painted under her father's especial instructions. It was not taken in the dress of the time; but a loose white robe was gathered in with a few simple folds at the waist. The long hair of the palest gold was just parted on the forehead, and then fell unbound to the waist. Not an ornament of any kind was introduced, only one white thin hand held a bunch of lilies. The likeness was very strong; and the artist had caught, with great felicity, the sweet expression, the purity and the fragility which were Constance's great charm. You believed in angels as you gazed upon her face. On either side of the hearth sat Lord Norbourne and Mr. Courtenaye; they had dined together, and the wine and fruit still stood on the small table drawn between them, where strawberries and cherries were not in strict accordance with the cheerful fire. But Lord Norbourne was greatly in advance of his age, and, as to the matter of that, of our own. He had no vague, false notions of beginning fires in November, and ending them in May; but had arrived at the philosophical conclusion, that there are very few evenings, in all the year, that a fire is not a consummation of domestic felicity in England most devoutly to be wished.

Norbourne had been exerting himself to amuse his uncle, but with little success; and the conversation languished till the servants had left the room.

"I have seemed very ungracious," said Lord Norbourne; "but I am too much occupied with one subject to be able to talk on any other."

"What is it?" exclaimed Courtenaye: "I will, at least, promise to be an attentive listener."

"That I do not doubt," replied his uncle, with a forced smile; "for I am going to talk about your marrying again."

Norbourne coloured; and, after a moment's silence, said,—

"This is a very painful subject. For both our sakes, might it not be avoided?"

"No," returned the other; "the confidence that now exists between us, and to which I cling as the last happiness of my life, must be unbroken by even the shadow of a restraint. Would you wish it otherwise, Norbourne?"

"My dearest uncle!" exclaimed his listener.

"We shall feel more at ease," continued

ord Norbourn, "when each fully understands the feelings of the other. I have drunk, I own, from the subject; but an interview that I had this morning induces me to esfer it no longer. I saw Miss Churchill to-day."

"Ethel!" exclaimed Norbourn, his strong and uncontrollable emotion betraying the power that her name still had over him: he ied to say something more, but the words ied on his lips.

"I never saw so lovely a creature," continued his uncle: "I do not now wonder that ou found it so hard to forgive me. Ah, I was rong, very wrong!"

"My dear uncle," interrupted the other, let there be some remembrances buried forer in oblivion between us."

"Not yet," returned Lord Norbourn. "I el what I owe you; the future must repay e past."

"I cannot bear you to speak thus," interrupted Courtenaye. "When I think of that smle creature whose sweet eyes are now oking upon us, as if indeed they looked from even; when I recall all your kindness, and l your affection,—I feel, indeed, that you ve a right to dispose of my whole existence."

"I should be glad to do so for your happiness," replied his uncle, in a tone of earnest ffection: "I always loved you, but the last w months have drawn us so much together. here is a tie between us nothing can break."

"Nothing, indeed!" replied Norbourn, king his uncle's hand.

Both were silent for a few minutes, when ord Norbourn resumed the conversation.

"But you do not ask me how, when, and here?—have you no curiosity to hear where met with Miss Churchill?"

Norbourn smiled, and his uncle continued. "Of all places in the world, at Sir Robert /alpole's villa at Chelsea."

His listener looked astonished, and added, a whisper,—“You call her Miss Churchill; how is it that you know her by that name ther than her present one?”

"Why, Miss Churchill is her present name; it I forget that you know nothing of her history. That singularly foolish old lady, her andmother, got up a sort of caricature conspiracy, and Miss Churchill was to have been arried to a coxcombical Jacobite, of the name Trevanion; but he was arrested in the urch, though he has since escaped by means 'the jailor's daughter."

"But what could bring Miss Churchill to ondon?"

"Why, her grandmother came off at once see what friends she could find; but a foolh visit to the Dutcheess of Buckingham, some discreet letters, and Mr. Trevanion's escape, ade Mrs. Churchill the object of serious ispection. Lady Marchmont—it is extraordinary how women do learn every thing!—ard that an arrest was intended, and what es she and her fair friend do, but set off, like

two errant damsels in a romance, to obtain a pardon from Sir Robert."

"And how did they succeed?" asked Norbourn.

"Why, just as might be expected," replied his uncle, "not at all: Walpole thought them two fools for their pains; and, irritated by the gout, dismissed them with as little ceremony as possible."

"And can nothing be done for the poor, old lady?" exclaimed Courtenaye, eagerly.

"And the pretty young one?" returned his lordship, laughing. "Why, I have been a complete Amadis of Gaul this morning, rescuing distressed beauty, if not from peril, from perplexity. I met Lady Marchmont on the terrace, not a little surprised to meet her ladyship there."

"Lord Marchmont is in the opposition, is he not?" asked his nephew.

"Yes, for the time being; not that he knows very well what he is. We care little for him, his solemn lordship is one of those never long attached to any party, it being quite impossible to come up to their exaggerated ideas of self-importance. They reckon time by a series of personal affronts; for an aptitude to take offence is the constant characteristic of their low, dull vanity—a vanity never satisfied. Still it surprised me to meet Lady Marchmont at Chelsea."

"I never," said Norbourn, "observed any similarity of opinion between the brilliant countess and her lord and master."

"True," returned the other; "but you must have noted, as well as I have done, a careful avoidance of any thing like direct opposition to Lord Marchmont; therefore, I certainly wondered at her appearance."

"But how did she interest you in their favour?" asked his nephew.

"By introducing Miss Churchill," said Lord Norbourn, earnestly. "Norbourn, till I saw that lovely face—so pale, so sad—I never felt how little had her happiness been considered. I cannot tell you how I was touched by her appearance;—what a relief it was to me when I found that I could serve her."

"My dearest uncle," exclaimed Norbourn, "how little are people in general aware of how kind you are!"

"I care for the opinion of people in general," replied his companion, "precisely what it is worth—nothing! Every hour my contempt increases for the herd of mankind. False, flattering, and cowardly,—treating them ill is only giving them their deserts, and they treat you all the better in consequence. Trample them under foot, and then, being in their proper places, they know how to behave."

"It is very discouraging," answered the other, "to find how often kindness is thrown away; but it will not be so in the present instance."

"That is a hint, is it not, to go on with my story?" asked Lord Norbourn, smiling.

"Well, I found Sir Robert in a very bad hu-

mour: some silly vote, and still sillier speech, of Lord Marchmont had irritated him the night before; and the names of the very gentlemen to whom Miss Churchill had referred as their securities, enraged him to the last degree. It was owing to their opposition that our member lost his election for the county."

"How unfortunate!" cried Courtenaye.

"All's well that ends well," replied his uncle. "Sir Robert was, at first, very much surprised at my taking up the case, and obviously did not know to the influence of which lady he was to attribute it. I believe his opposition, in the first instance, originated in the fear that, by thus acting, I was making a fool of myself."

"An alarm as unnecessary, as the alarms our friends entertain on our account generally are. A friend is never alarmed for us in the right place. But how did you manage to convince Sir Robert that you were in your sober senses?"

"Why, I did what I always do," returned his uncle, "to a man for whom I have a respect,—I told him the truth. I frankly avowed that I took an interest in Miss Churchill, and on your account."

Norbourne coloured, from mixed sensations; still hope was the predominant one.

"I believe that the whole business," continued his uncle, "is now settled. I do not think that you will regret Mrs. Churchill being obliged to remain in town for some time to come; and if the fine does dip somewhat deeply into the old lady's hoards, it matters little; for whoever you marry will be unto me as a daughter."

Norbourne could only look at his uncle with grateful affection; and Lord Norbourne continued:—

"I think, Norbourne, that I could do any thing for yourself; yet shall I tell you that my present line of conduct does not arise from my own prompting."

"To whose then?" exclaimed Norbourne, in undisguised astonishment.

"I am," answered Lord Norbourne, "but fulfilling the last wishes of our poor Constance. You do not even now know how precious your happiness was to that gentle and loving heart."

"I cannot bear," exclaimed Norbourne, "to think of happiness, and Constance in her grave. Ah, if she did but know the sorrow I have felt for her sake."

"If," returned her father, "according to her own sweet belief, the departed yet watch the beloved on earth, how would she wish to soothe an unavailing regret! But you must now see a letter I found, addressed to me, after her death."

Lord Norbourne rose from his seat; and, unlocking one of the closets, took from it a small ivory casket. "You open it," said he in a broken voice, "by touching this spring. Read the letter it contains, and return it to me to-morrow. It is a treasure with which I would not part for any thing in this world."

CHAPTER LXX.

THE LAST LETTER.

Strong as the death it masters, is the hope
That onward looks to immortality:
Let the frame perish, so the soul survive;
Pure, spiritual, and loving.—I believe
The grave exalts, not separates, the ties
That hold us in affection to our kind.
I will look down from yonder pitying sky,
Watching and waiting those I loved on earth
Anxious in heaven, until they too are there.
I will attend your guardian angel's side,
And weep away your faults with holy tears;
Your midnight shall be fill'd with solemn thrills;
And when, at length, death brings you to my
Mine the first welcome heard in Paradise.

NORBOURNE delayed opening the casket alone in his room; and even then he hesitated. There was something exquisitely painful in the memories that crowded upon his mind of Constance's daily acts of devotion rose before him: never till this moment had he felt them unrequited; but now he was remembered like a reproach. He did not accuse himself of a moment's unkindness or even coldness; from the hour she stood at the altar together, her happiness had been the most sacred and the most tender in life; but now he felt as if he had wronged her in not loving her entirely. The impression another had been in his heart,—might have shadowed have sometimes fallen upon him. Any occupation was better than this morbid dejection; and, suddenly drawing the lamp towards him, he opened the casket. The first things he saw were the long locks of fair hair, which her father had had after Constance's death. Norbourne smote him, that he had not thought of a sad memorial. His eyes filled with tears as he took up the glittering lengths. The pale gold was lovely as ever; but the something in the touch from which he involuntarily recoiled. It is strange the difference between the hair of the living and the hair of the dead; the one so soft, so fragrant, and fallis the other so harsh, so scentless, and so stiff. In nothing is the presence of mortality so strongly marked.

There was a perfume hung about the locks, but it came not from that coldly golden hair; it rose from the withered leaves of flowers, whose scent outlived their life. Norbourne at once recognised the ribbon which himself had put round the roses the day of that festival whose end had been so fatal. "Alas!" exclaimed he, "how tenderly her father garnered these tokens of the love and again he felt as if he ought to have done likewise."

Below these lay the letter. No longer could he see that it had been often read; it wore the trace of tears—tears shed in proud, the reserved Lord Norbourne. That his uncle did, indeed, love him as his own son, or never would he have let him see on these proofs of the tenderest sorrow the most gentle affection. He took up the letter, and well did he know the delicate and

; but he saw that the characters
lous, and it had obviously been
ifferent times. How much did it
e heart struggling for expression
weakness! At first the page
him; but, with a strong effort,
ad the contents.

OF CONSTANCE TO HER FATHER.

EST FATHER,—Before you begin
ag letter, I entreat your patient
there be aught in its contents to
o displease you. If you could
lief that it is to me to write, you
w, forgive me.
u read this letter, the child whom
m has made so happy, will be
grave. Read it, my beloved pa-
expression of my latest wish on
rlish that will be next my heart
es to beat. I know that I am dy-
t for your sake, my father, I could
lie. You know not how weary I
or the cold sickness that often
me. The day is very long, and
t longer. Things that I used to
ly fatigue me. I gaze into the
d my eyes close with its bright-
k upon my flowers only to ask
y or I shall be the first to fade.
time when I was sad to think of
I shuddered at the thought of the
d tomb: but God, in his mercy,
such terror to last. I used to
the grave, where love was not:
eel that his love is with us even
are the ties that now bind me to
world, and they will be with me

, it is your old age left childless
biding sorrow. I fear your proud
cing nature. Who will force you
n I am gone? You will be un-
your unhappiness will take the
terness and of sarcasm: and yet,
I allow it, there is one who would
most as much as I have done.
has for you an affection that but
ve for their father. He admires,
uds you; and confidence on your
urn, will make him your affec-
levoted child. I sometimes hope
be so, for my sake. You will
her over my loss: and grief sub-
aws those who share it together.
dearest father, for what I long,
say. Norbourne is young; he
ve, I hope, marry again. May
marries be to you as a daughter!
uch; you can make any one love
ou choose. I have long felt that
influence over my cousin that
is wife; for he never loved me.
t at this: I was a child when I
child in every thing but my pas-
e; but I grew to womanhood
seem to have lived years, so much

have I thought and felt during the last few
months. I have learnt the secret of others
from my own heart, and that taught me that
my cousin had for me only the affection of a
brother. How unlike my own feverish, un-
tranquil, and fearful fondness for him! yet
how kind he always was! how tender in his
even feminine care of me! Hour after hour
has he turned from all study, all employment,
all amusement, to watch and soothe my sick
fancies. I could not help being happy in his
presence; and yet his absence has often been
a relief. I have wept with painful gratitude
over the favourite flowers that, every morning,
he would allow no one to gather for me but
himself. Still there lacked that sympathy
which taught me to read his thoughts without
a word. Nothing but love can answer to love;
no affection, no kindness, no care, can supply
its place: it is its own sweet want.

Do you remember my fainting at Marble
Villa? A sudden and dreadful jealousy of
Lady Marchmont entered my mind. God only
can forgive me for all I then thought! for
God only can know the agony of my suffer-
ing. A moment's frantic misery led to an
explanation with Lady Marchmont; and I
learnt that my wretchedness had been vain.
But not with my jealousy of her, who was
afterwards my dear and true friend, did the
knowledge depart that such jealousy had
brought. I could not observe Norbourne's
feelings without perceiving how different they
were to mine. There was an anxiety about
his kindness, which too often appeared as if it
had something to make up to its object.

From discovering that he did not love me,
it was but a step to finding that he loved an-
other. I have watched him read, first earnest-
ly; then the page has been closed uncon-
sciously, and he remained lost in a gloomy
revery. I have opened the volume when he
left the room, and found that the record was
of ill-placed affection. Often have I noted
how he shrank away from any conversation
that turned on those tender, yet deep senti-
ments on which I could have talked to him
forever: and, alas! worst of all to bear—I
have bent over his feverish and troubled sleep:
there was a name breathed amid his dreams,
but that name was not mine.

My father, I charge you with the care of
his future happiness: think that it is the last,
the dearest wish of your child. In the mutual
affection between you and my husband, I see
the resource of your old age. His ties will
become yours, and a new growth of kindly
interests and warm affections will spring up
under the shadow of the old. If, as I some-
times hope, the departed spirit is permitted to
retain in another world those affections which
made its heaven on earth, how tenderly will I
watch over you!

My beloved father, our parting is but for a
season. Not in vain have these divine words
been spoken, whose comfort is with me even
now. I die in their glorious faith, and in
their cheering hope. If I die, as I trust to do,

watching the faces that I love to the last, these words shall be my latest gift to you, my father; they will bring their own power.

I am very faint, I can write no more. I commend my dearest husband to you; and that God may bless, and reunite us all, is the latest prayer of

Your affectionate child,

CONSTANCE.

CHAPTER LXXI.

A REQUEST REFUSED.

Age is a dreary thing when left alone:
It needs the sunshine brought by fresher years;
It lives its youth again while seeing youth,
And childhood brings its childhood back again.
But for the lonely and the aged man
Left to the silent hearth, the vacant home
Where no sweet voices sound, no light steps come
Disturbing memory from its heaviness—
Who for such lot! 'tis life's most desolate!
Age needeth love and youth to cheer the path—
The short dark pathway leading to the tomb.

"Is Lord Marchmont not yet come in?" asked the countess, with a degree of impatience which her husband's return was not commonly in the habit of calling forth.

"No, my lady," replied the servant.

"You will let me know the moment he comes in."

"Yes, my lady;" and he disappeared.

"How I do hate," exclaimed Henrietta, "those mechanical 'yeses' and 'noes!' I wish everybody else was an impatient as myself. 'Though, perhaps,'" added she, half-smiling, "it is as well that they are not."

A few hasty turns up and down the luxurious room, and she resumed her seat, and began again to read the letter, which lay open on a table beside. It was from Sir Jasper; and, for the first time, he asked her to come and see him. The letter was written with cheerful words; but, to the quick eye of affection, there lacked the cheerful spirit.

"It is selfish," wrote her uncle, "to ask you to leave all your gayety, all your triumphs, to share an old man's solitude; but I wish it very much; and my dear child must, indeed, be changed, if it be not a pleasure to gratify that wish. Summer is now in great beauty, but I cannot enjoy our green walks without a companion; and I want you to see how all your favourite flowers have prospered under my care. You must come and be grateful. Ethel Churchill—it was very kind of her to write to me—says, that I shall find you equally altered and improved; so you see, dear Henrietta, I need to refresh my memory even of you. Come you must, or rather, you will; for I have already made all kinds of preparations for your arrival."

"Why," exclaimed Henrietta, "have I left it to him to ask me? why have I not proposed going to him? why have I allowed Lord Marchmont's trivial excuses for delay, to postpone a visit which would have made my uncle so happy? But I will go at once."

Again she began to read her letter, when,

suddenly letting it fall, she turned; a terrible fear had entered into her mind; handwriting was certainly more treacherous than usual. He was ill, and would not write her so. At once her imagination conjured up a thousand shapes of suffering. She thought of her uncle—sick, lonely, and pining for her. She could not bear the picture; and, covering her face with her hands, as if to exclude light, she began to weep bitterly.

At this moment Lord Marchmont entered the room in a very bad humour; for one of his servants, sent by Lady Marchmont to deliver him, had, by giving his message aloud, betrayed Lady Marchmont's request. She immediately, as she wanted to speak on a matter of the utmost consequence, called him under the decent and disagreeable necessity of returning at once, before a bet was decided, whether his own cook, or that of Montague's would prepare a single dish of greatest perfection. The jury of taste he had impannelled, and here was he summoned away ten minutes before the dishes came. It was a trying circumstance, if not to his philosophy, to his temper.

"What is the matter?" asked he, entering the drawing-room, and finding Henrietta sobbing; "what can induce you to distress yourself so by crying?"

"My uncle is ill, very ill!" exclaimed Henrietta, speaking, however, more from her fears of her excited fancy than from the contents of the letter.

"Sir Jasper ill!" replied Lord Marchmont with the most decorous expression of distress. "I am grieved to hear of it. When I receive the truly painful intelligence?"

"O, may I not go to him at once?" exclaimed Henrietta, alive to nothing but her own feelings.

"I should, of course, however it might be inconvenient to myself, wish you to do what was most proper on the occasion. But I know," continued he, "that you are apt to exaggerate: perhaps you will allow me again to repeat my question of, When I receive the information of Sir Jasper's illness?"

"Read his letter," exclaimed the countess, wringing her hands impatiently.

Lord Marchmont deliberately took up the epistle, first smoothing, with great care, the crease that had been made by folding it in a different form to the original one. Then, he changed its position, till it lay upon it exactly as he liked; while Lady Marchmont watched him in a perfect state of anxiety.

"There is nothing relative to indifference in the first page," said he, after taking a long enough, as his wife thought, to have perused twenty letters. "But Sir Jasper has talent for epistolary correspondence—sure he has nothing else to do; but it is of great importance. Perhaps your ship will have the kindness to point out the passage referring to his illness."

"Read the end," said Henrietta, more impatient, and more irritable every moment.

Lord Marchmont slowly turned over the as, smoothing them as he went along. "I cannot say much for your ladyship's care in Sir Jasper's letters."

"Never mind; only, do read it," interrupted Henrietta countess.

"To gain his lordship began his long and delicate perusal, while Henrietta watched the motion of his eyes with a degree of impatience she could scarcely repress."

"Why, surely," cried she, "you are not going to read it again!"

"Indeed, I need to do so; for I cannot find Sir Jasper makes the slightest allusion to illness."

"He is too kind, too good!" exclaimed Lord Marchmont: "I know he would not tell me for the world; but I see it in his unsteady writing."

"Sir Jasper is advanced in life, you could expect his hand to be as steady as mine," replied her husband, very calmly.

"But his anxiety to see me," interrupted Henrietta.

"Is exceedingly natural. There never was anything so dull as Meredith Place. I shall never forget the few weeks that I spent there."

"It was our honeymoon," thought his faithful wife to herself; but she said nothing.

"I really must, once for all," added Lord Marchmont, in an unusually solemn tone, "re-

member that your ladyship will not give way to whims and caprices. Nothing could be so inconvenient than the way in which you have done me this morning. You never consider what you interrupt: and, after all, Sir Jasper's illness exists only in your own fancy."

"Well, well," returned Lady Marchmont, "as patience was fairly exhausted, "at-

tend you will allow me to judge for myself. I propose leaving London to-night."

"Leaving London to-night!" ejaculated her husband—"are you mad? Why, we dine at the prince's to-day."

"What do I care for the prince?" cried Henrietta: "I must and will go to my uncle."

"Must and will," Lady Marchmont, are the words which my own proper sense of my authority cannot permit you to use. I beg to say, definitely, that I cannot permit you to leave London at present. It is very obvious how much his royal highness admires you; court favour is too fleeting not to be made most of while it lasts."

"But think how anxious my poor uncle is to see me!" said Henrietta, in a most pleading tone.

"It is fortunate that you have a calmer mind to direct you than your own!" replied Lord Marchmont. "I have an idea—"

"Have you really?" thought Henrietta; "I care of it, for it is your first!"

"Instead of going to see Sir Jasper, let us have him to come and see us: of course, the action ought to be from the master of the house; I shall, therefore, write to him myself."

"My uncle will never leave home," cried Henrietta.

"I am sure," returned Lord Marchmont, "there is nothing so very delightful in Meredith Place, that I remember, to induce its master always to stay there; so let me beg you to compose yourself. No woman who has the least respect for herself should ever cry, it is peculiarly unbecoming; and now I have the honour to wish you a good morning. Have you any commands when I write to your uncle?"

"None!" replied Henrietta; and, as the door closed, she flung herself back among the cushions, exclaiming, "O, that I had never married!"

CHAPTER LXXII.

THE TRUTH OF PRESENTIMENTS.

I felt my sorrow ere it came,
As storms are felt on high,
Before a single cloud denote
Their presence on the sky.

The heart has omens deep and true
That ask no aid from words;
Like viewless music from the harp
With none to wake its chords.

Strange, subtle, are these mysteries,
And link'd with unknown powers,
Marking mysterious links that bind
The spirit world to ours.

HENRIETTA wept long and bitterly; in vain did she try to gain some composure by reading and rereading Sir Jasper's letter. True, there was not even an allusion to illness in any way; parts were even playful in their cheerfulness; still she felt assured that there was something unusual in the earnestly expressed wish to see her. Her uncle had always been so reluctant to urge his claims on her time or attention, so fearful of abridging even her slightest pleasure, that it was no ordinary motive that induced him to urge her visit.

"Alas!" exclaimed she, "what a mistake is our endeavour after happiness! I have all that haunted my childish dreams in our lonely woods; I have wealth, rank, beauty, and wretchedness! I pine for love, and none love me, save one kind old man, and he is far away, suffering solitude I might share, and sickness I could soothe!"

The time had passed quicker than she had thought; and a message from Lord Marchmont, conveying the important intelligence that he was gone to dress, and particularly requesting that her ladyship would be punctual, was the first thing that roused her. She started from her seat.

"Perhaps," thought she, "if I show Marchmont a readiness to oblige him to-day, and make myself very agreeable, to-morrow I may renew the subject of my visit, and persuade him into consenting."

But her heart sank within her when she thought of the cold, chill obstinacy of her husband; even her toilet could not distract her attention. The rich brocade enveloped her graceful figure, and the diamonds glistened in

her luxuriant hair, yet they scarcely won a glance from the wearer: but Lady Marchmont had that perfect style of beauty which nothing could disfigure. Mere prettiness needs the becoming, but beauty asks nothing but itself.

The dinner was dull enough; and that worst sort of dulness which frets the spirits, by perpetual demands on their exertion. Lady Marchmont was glad when it was over; and she entered her carriage to return home alone, for Lord Marchmont was going to his club, he had lately taken to whist-playing. As she alighted, there seemed an unusual stir in the hall; servants came forward to meet her, and then started back; she knew without asking that something was the matter, and scarcely could she find voice to ask a question, which her own fears answered. An old domestic came forward; she knew him at once, he had lived for years with her uncle: she clasped her hands, her lips moved, but no sound came from them.

"Madam," said the man, "we have ordered the travelling carriage; I trust you will yet be in time to see my master."

Lady Marchmont neither shrieked nor fainted, though lip and cheek blanched to the most deadly whiteness.

"In time to see him!" muttered she; and her hollow whisper seemed to reverberate through the hall. "Where is the carriage?" said she, hurrying to the door.

"Won't your ladyship change your dress?" asked her favourite maid, who stood ready prepared for the journey.

"No," exclaimed Henrietta, opening the hall door herself, and hurrying down the steps, where the carriage stood waiting: "tell the postillions to drive for life and death!" exclaimed she, springing in without assistance; and, throwing herself back, drew the hood of her mantle over her face.

Her favourite woman followed her in silence; she saw that the advice and directions with which she was generally ready, would not even be heard. Like the other servants, she was awed by her mistress's pale and speechless despair. During the whole of the journey, Henrietta never spoke but twice, and that was to urge the attendants to speed. Now and then a slight shudder passed through her frame; it was when the image of her uncle rose too painfully distinct before her: she dared not ask even herself, should she see him again?

On Lord Marchmont's return, he too, was struck with the unusual appearance of confusion in his hall; but anger was his predominant sensation when he heard that Henrietta had actually set off without waiting one moment.

"She must be mad!" exclaimed he, "to go without consulting me, and without my permission!"

"Her ladyship thought, perhaps, that you would overtake her," said one of the attendants.

"She thought very wrong then," said Lord Marchmont, pettishly: "she may go on her

wildgoose-chase alone, I am not going over the country on such a night. Why, it rains in torrents!"

The idea that it was more comfort the house than out of it, did much towards conciling his lordship. He felt so glad that, as his wife had acted with sanction, she should be subject to all inconvenience, as if such could be felt Henrietta's state of mind.

"Some of Sir Jasper's property," said he to himself, on his way to his bedroom, "is yet unsettled. I do not think there is any danger of his leaving from Henrietta; still, old men are capricious, and, perhaps, it is as well that Henrietta should be at all events, if she had stayed tomorrow, I must have accompanied her that will be perfectly needless."

He then allowed his valet to help with his dressing-gown; and, leaning the large well-cushioned chair, took a very picture of luxurious ease, said, "I have a bottle of the old Burgundy; let Chloe must exert himself to send some slight *chef-d'œuvre* for supper: I think one needs something, after so much annoyance!"

CHAPTER LXXIII.

RETURN HOME.

'Tis not my home—he made it home
With earnest love and care;
How can it be my own dear home,
And he no longer there?

I ask'd to meet my father's eyes,
But they were closed to me;
My father, would that I were laid
In the dark grave with thee.

Where should I look for constant love,
To answer unto mine?
Others had many kindred hearts,
But I had only thine.

THE shades of the evening closed just as Henrietta gave one sad turn, she turned her face from the carriage-window she first recognised a familiar object: a clump of firs that grew on a hill, and landmark to the country for miles. Now, they stood dark and phantom thrown out by the crimson sky behind; heart sickened with impatience, it seemed longer now that they drew so gradually, the long shadows mingled as objects became confused, and it was not to light the lamps and flambeaux, an avant-courier began to sound his horn dangerous to risk meeting another car on the then state of the roads. All these sensations wound the anxiety of Lady Marchmont to a pitch of feverish agony: her cheek her hand trembled; she felt a sense choking in the throat; she felt dizzy, and yet with one terror pressed paramount over all. The carriage stopped, and, for the first time, a scream rose from her lips: she knew that it was at the place they were stopping. It was but a r

for the gates were open, the porter was not at his lodge, and they drove in.

"Let me out!" exclaimed Henrietta, as the heavy vehicle made its second pause at the hall-door. She sprang from the carriage, and ran into the house: "Where is my uncle?" cried she; but the question was received in lead silence by the assembled servants: the silence was sufficient answer. "He is dead!" said Henrietta, aloud: "I knew it!" and she stood as if rooted to the ground in the middle of the hall.

None who ever saw her ever forgot her to her dying day; her mantle had dropped on the ground, and her long hair, yet partly gathered up with jewels, fell in black masses over her shoulders. From the feverish pain in her temples, she had pushed it back from her forehead, and the whole face was exposed. It was like that of a corpse, with a strange unnatural spot of red burning on either cheek, and the large eyes fixed and glaring, but with no expression. No one had courage to speak to her, and there she stood for some minutes: a slight movement among the servants recalled her to herself; she started, and hurried at once to her uncle's room. A dim light showed the dark velvet bed, with its hearse-like plumes, and one or two spectral figures, that seemed to lit round its obscurity: Henrietta saw but one object, the form extended cold and rigid, and the pale and set face, that would never more look affection upon her. Quietly, almost calmly, she approached; and, standing by the bedside, gazed steadfastly on the body: at last, clasping her hands passionately together, "Leave me!" exclaimed she, throwing herself on her knees beside the bed. The women obeyed; but, ere the door closed, they heard the long suppressed sobs of the heart's uttermost agony.

Again and again did Henrietta start from her knees; and, dashing the tears from her eyes, gaze on the face of the dead, hoping, almost expecting, that some trace of life would appear, and as often did she dash herself down in fruitless despair: there was that on those cold, white features, none ever mistake.

"If I had but seen him, heard his last words, caught his last look, and told him yet once again how I loved him, I could bear his death; but to know that his latest look rested on others, that he wished to see me and did not, it is too much to bear!" and again a violent burst of weeping supplied the place of words.

An hour elapsed, and the attendants returned, but Lady Marchmont again dismissed them: that night she had resolved to watch beside the dead. It is well that the body sometimes sinks beneath the mind; Henrietta could not have borne such intense misery, but she grew faint. For nearly two days she had taken neither food nor rest, and even the relief of tears had been denied to her uncertain and feverish suspense. When the attendants came in the morning, they found her, her long black hair wet with tears, her cheek burning, but asleep beside the corpse. It was the heavy worn-out slumber of exhaustion.

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CHAPTER LXXIV.

THE LAST NIGHT WITH THE DEAD.

How awful is the presence of the dead!
The hours rebuked, stand silent at their side
Passions are hush'd before that stern repose;
Two, and two only, sad exceptions share—
Sorrow and love,—and these are paramount.
How deep the sorrow, and how strong the love.
Seeming as utterly unfeeling before.
Ah! parting tries their depths. At once arise
Affection's treasures, never dream'd till then.
Death teaches heavy lessons, hard to bear;
And most it teaches us what we have lost,
In losing those who loved us.

HENRIETTA crowded a life's suffering into the next week. There is need of change, even with the dead; and each of the mournful rites preceding interment brought on a frantic outburst of sorrow. The placing the body in the coffin was a dreadful struggle; but when it became needful to screw down the lid, then, indeed, she felt that she had parted with her kind old uncle forever. No entreaties could prevail on her to leave the room; she sat with her head enveloped in her mantle, her presence only indicated by a quick convulsive sob, at any pause in that peculiar and jarring sound. She had, on the second day, recognised, and spoken with her usual kindness to the old servants; indeed, it was something of a consolation to gather every possible detail respecting her uncle. The account was soothing, rather than otherwise; he appeared in his usual health and spirits till the attack, which carried him off in two days. He had suffered but little pain; and his last words were a blessing on his beloved child.

"If he had but been spared a few hours," was her constant exclamation: "his last look, his last word—I could lay down my life to have had them!"

Ah! the tender and solemn farewell beside the bed of death is, indeed, a consolation to the survivor! There is nothing so soothing as to know that the last earthly wish has been confided to your fulfilment, the last expressions of earthly affection have been your own. The eyes closing to their last cold sleep, rested upon you, and were glad to rest; and your prayers were the latest music in the weary ear. It is some comfort to think that you sacrificed even your own sorrow in the beloved presence; and the thousand sad, slight offices, are remembered with such melancholy tenderness. But all this was denied to Henrietta, and hers was a nature to feel their privation most acutely; sensitive and affectionate, she exaggerated their omission with all the bitterness of self-reproach.

At length the day of the funeral came; and, till the coffin was carried to the hearse, Lady Marchmont never felt that she was quite parted from her uncle. She saw him, even as she had last gazed upon him, pale, cold, and awful; but still he was there. The coffin was to her like a shrine; all that she held most dear and most precious was within its dark and silent sanctuary. She sat in the room; she saw them bear it away: with one strong and convulsive effort she rose, for so.

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thing could prevent her following her more than father to the grave.

All parade had been avoided by Sir Jasper's express orders; but the poor of the whole neighbourhood gathered to pay the last respect to the remains of their friend and benefactor. The churchyard was crowded; and yet so deep was the stillness, that not one word was lost of the burial service. Afterwards, it was a pleasure to Lady Marchmont to think of the affection evinced towards her uncle; but, at the time, the numbers oppressed her: she would have given worlds to have been alone in the churchyard. With an agony too great for endurance, she heard the ropes creak as they lowered the coffin into the ground: and when the gravel rattled on the lid, it struck too upon her heart. To her dying hour she was haunted by the fearful sound; it came upon her ear in the stillness of night, making her start from her restless pillow; and often did she hear it, amid light and music, turning her pale with the image of death even while surrounded by gayety and festival. But when they went to tread down the earth, it seemed to her like sacrilege; and, forgetting every thing in one strong emotion, she sprang forward to prevent it. The effort was too much; and, for the first time, she sank back in the arms of the servants in strong hysterics!

She was carried home quite exhausted; the only sign she gave of consciousness was, that when they were about to take her to the room which had formerly been her own, she raised her head, and feebly insisted on being taken to her uncle's. Every thing here was peculiarly his, and there she had gazed for the last time, on his inanimate features; in that room she could call up his image more distinctly than elsewhere. The presence of the dead was around her, and it was dearer than aught else in the world beside.

CHAPTER LXXV.

THE REMEMBRANCE OF THE DEAD.

Pale Memory sits lone, brooding o'er the past,
That makes her misery. She looketh round,
And asks the wide world for forgetfulness:
She asks in vain; the shadow of past hours
Close palpable around her; shapes arise—
Shadows, yet seeming real; and sad thoughts,
That make a night of darkness and of dreams
Her empire is upon the dead and gone;
With that she mocks the present, and shuts out
The future, till the grave, which is her throne,
Has absolute dominion.

SOME days elapsed before Lady Marchmont was able to leave her bed; not that she suffered under actual illness, but the passion of sorrow had completely exhausted a frame naturally fragile. But youth, health, and time, are strong to console, and the first bitterness of regret inevitably passes; but from that time Henrietta never recovered her former gayety: a well of grief had opened in her heart; and nothing could stop the under-current of its deep, still waters. One idea was perpetually recurring, "There is no one to love me now!" and, in proportion to the want

of affection, the craving for it became stronger. While Sir Jasper lived, there was one human being in whom she could repose unlimited confidence; one to whom, under any circumstances, she could turn for consolation; one to whom even a trifle, concerning herself, was the dearest thing on earth: now, there was no one whom she could truly say loved her. With all her advantages, with all her fascination and her loveliness, she was flattered, admired, and courted, but not loved. How unsatisfactory was the homage of the eye and the lip only!

It was while dwelling on these topics of sadness and irritation, that her eye fell upon Lord Marchmont's letter of invitation to Sir Jasper. It arrived but a few moments after his death, and had never been opened; she broke the seal, but had not patience to read it through, its cold commonplace civility fretted her very heart. Impatiently, she tore it into fragments, and flung it in the fire.

"And this is the man," exclaimed she, with a bitter laugh, "to whom I am united for my life; my inferior in every way—mean, shallow, heartless—I despise him too much for hatred!"

But, deep within her secret soul, Lady Marchmont felt she hated her husband; at that moment she would have been thankful to have given up the world, and spent the rest of her life in the gloomy seclusion of Meredith Place. She turned away from the future with a morbid feeling of discouragement: her first brilliant dream of the pleasures of the world had been broken; she had experienced their worthlessness, and their vanity; she felt that they were insufficient to fill up the void in her heart; they had nothing wherewith to satisfy the noblest and the best part of her nature; they contented neither her mind nor her heart. Lassitude and discontent were her predominant sensations: she had only one strong wish—never to see Lord Marchmont again! She shuddered whenever his image came across her; and this dislike was increased by his letters. After a little decent sorrow had been put forth for the late "severe affliction," joined with some weariful truisms about resignation to the will of Providence, the rest of the epistle was filled up with reproofs about her ladyship's extraordinary and improper conduct in setting off without his consent!

Again was the letter flung in the fire, and again absolute loathing towards the writer arose in Henrietta's mind. Days passed on, quiet, languid, and sad. Every day that the weather permitted, Lady Marchmont visited her uncle's grave: it had become the principal object of her existence; and the weather, gloomy, cold, and rainy, though at the beginning of summer, harmonized well with her present frame of mind. She seemed to desire nothing beyond her present mode of life; and yet Henrietta was mistaken in supposing that she had now discovered the existence for which she was really best suited. Her keen feelings, and active fancy, would soon have needed employ: the imaginative temper-

bove all others, requires society and lent, else it preys too much on itself. truth was, that she had received a vio- cket, and it would be long before either body recovered their ordinary tone : mournful calm was soon disturbed by rom Lord Marchmont, urging her re- Week after week she delayed it, till at formally announced his intention of to fetch her himself. Henrietta's as renewed in all its passionate vio- leaving her uncle's grave was leaving ; and yet so subdued was her spirit, long indulgence of sorrow, that she ot find in herself even energy enough stance. The week that was yet to she spent in wandering through her favourite walks in hours of tearful eside his tomb, and in collecting to- very trifle on which he had set a value. nd again did she repeat her directions ery thing should be left in their old med places ; the grim crocodile itself, ung from the roof, acquired a value in 3.

ast evening arrived, and Henrietta re- from her prolonged visit to her uncle's The misty moonlight that struggled the black masses of gathering vapours, sufficed to guide her steps as she languid and lingering, along the nar- h : she had passed through the church- very evening before her former de- for London. How forcibly did the that had taken place in herself, strike r now ! Then she was somewhat sad ; as a sadness soon to be flung aside. ure was before her, brilliant because n ; she then believed its promises, for not proved them, there was so much she looked forward : now she looked to nothing, for nothing seemed worth Alas ! the worst part of a heavy is the despondency which it leaves

clouds, from whence the wan and misty moon sometimes emerged, but oftener only indicated her presence by a dim white ring, amid the dusky vapours.

Henrietta kept wandering to and fro like a disturbed spirit ; now watching the shelves, covered with dusty volumes, now gazing on the different articles, scattered in the same confusion as when Sir Jasper used his labora- tory. On a small table, drawn close to his arm-chair, lay opened a large book, which Henrietta stopped, every now and then, in her troubled walk, to read.

"It may easily be done !" muttered she ; and her fine features set with an expression of stern determination. Again she read the pass- age that had riveted her attention ; and, ris- ing from her seat, carried the still open volume, and laid it on a slab by the furnace in the laboratory : it was a celebrated treatise on poisons, written in the fifteenth century. The grate was laid with charcoal, to that she put a light, and then, as if she had forgotten some- thing, hurried to the library, and carefully locked the door. First returning to see that the fire had kindled, she then went to the window, which, with the first gleam of moon- light, she cautiously enclosed, and stepped into the shrubbery. A small drizzling rain was beginning to fall, but she heeded it not ; and, approaching a tree that stood near, began to gather the green fruit, with which its branches were thickly covered. Any one who had seen her, might have been pardoned for believing, from that hour, in supernatural ap- pearances. Her tall figure was wrapped in a loose white robe, and her long black hair hung down to her waist, already glistening with the raindrops. The moonlight fell directly on her face, whose features seemed as rigid as those of a statue, while the paleness was that of a corpse ; but the large gleaming eyes, so passionate and so wild, belonged to life—life, racked by that mental agony, life, and human life, only knows.

It was an almond tree beneath whose boughs she stood. A few weeks since they had been luxuriant with rosy blossoms ; fragile and deli- cate flowers, heralds most unsuited to the bitter fruit. The almond was now just formed in its green shell, and of these Henrietta gather- ed a quantity, and bore them into the library in the skirt of her dress. She then sat down by the fire, and carefully separated the stone from the pulp, which she burnt ; and her next task was to extract the kernel, which she did by means of a heavy pestle and the hearth. The kernels were next crushed together, and placed to simmer over the furnace.

From her childhood she had been accus- tomed to watch, and often to aid, in her uncle's chymical experiments ; she was, therefore, not at a loss, as a complete novice in the science would have been. More than once she re- ferred to the huge volume that lay unclasped before her ; and, at a certain point, she ap- proached a curiously wrought old cabinet ; from one of its recesses she took a glass meak, and some strongly aromatic vinegar. With a

CHAPTER LXXVI.

THE LABORATORY.

fair tree, the almond tree : there Spring the first promise of her ruy wreath ; the green leaves venture from the bud, fragile blossoms light the winter bough delicate colours, heralding the rose, own Aurora they might seem to be. lurks beneath their faint and lovely red ? the dark spirit in those fairy flowers ? eath !

ight was unusually dreary, as, for the e, Henrietta sat listening to the wind ned, in fitful intervals, round the an- use. There was not another sound ; med the only creature alive in the so profound was the quiet, and so

The red gleams of the wood fire l over the black wainscot in fantastic tions ; the long shadows from the l dark upon the floor ; and the win- hose curtains were still undrawn, out upon a sky covered with heavy

steady hand she fixed the mask on her face, and again approached the furnace. The strange-looking chamber, the red glare of the charcoal, her tall form, and long black hair loose, realized the wildest dream of one of the sorceresses of old, bending over herb and drug, to form their potent spells. Once she grew faint; and, springing to the outer room, she hastily undid the mask, and gasped for breath at the open window. She was deadly pale; but the exquisite features were even stern in their expression of unconquerable will.

Again she resumed her fearful task, and hours passed by; and she started as a red glimmer fell on the open page—it was the crimson coming of daybreak that gleamed through a crevice in the closed shutters. But her task was done! She snatched up two tiny vials, and poured into each a few drops, like singularly clear water; but in each of those drops was—death! The glass stoppers were inserted; the bottles hermetically sealed; and, depositing them in a secret drawer of a small casket, she locked it, put the little key on a chain that she always wore of her uncle's hair; and, pressing it to her heart, exclaimed, "Now I am mistress of my fate in this world!" Her rapid movement made her long, loose sleeve catch in the glass mask, which fell to the ground, and was shivered in a thousand fragments.

"It matters not," exclaimed she; "I need its services no more!" Hastily she glanced around; and, returning to the laboratory, cleared away all traces of the night's work, and extinguished the charcoal. She then flung open the windows, for the atmosphere was heavy and oppressive; but she started back as the fresh air blew upon her throbbing temples, but brought no colour to her wan lip and cheek. Heavily her eyes closed before the cheerful light, and she turned away with a sick shudder. The closed curtains made the bedroom still dark; and, extinguishing the lamp, she flung herself on the bed. Over-tired and excited, it was long before she slept; sleep came at last, but it was broken and feverish; and the interrupted breath, and the red spot that soon burned on her cheek, told that the dream was one of pain and fear, and that slumber was not rest.

CHAPTER LXXVII.

THE SEASON.

And yet it is a wasted heart:
It is a wasted mind
That seeks not in the inner world
Its happiness to find;

For happiness is like the bird
That broods above its nest,
And finds beneath its folded wings,
Life's dearest, and its best.

A little space is all that hope
Or love can ever take;
The wider that the circle spreads,
The sooner it will break.

ANOTHER season had recently commenced its round of gayety; the present was outwardly

as glad as if there had been no past; the sunshine played over the onward current of existence; and the bubbles, weeds and flowers, danced on the surface: few cared to look on the rock and the darkness below. Every one appeared to be doing precisely the same things that were doing at that very time the year before. The streets were filled with carriages, the Mall with a gay crowd; the talk was of *fêtes* and visits; and eyes and diamonds seemed equally bright. The spring had come forth in all its beauty, and the flower was in the grass, and the green leaf on the bough. Change is slow and strange in the social and the natural world; it requires some great convulsion to alter the aspect of either: but, in the hidden and inward world,—there it is that change does its work; we marvel to find how ourselves are altered, while every thing seems to have remained the same around us; but decay always begins at the heart.

Mrs. Churchill being settled in London, Ethel had come out as a beauty and an heiress, and was brilliantly successful in both capacities. Sir Robert had remitted the fine: but flatteries, executed with whatever genius, were quite wasted on the quiet and pensive girl, who

Listen'd, and forgot them with a smile.

Youth has one delightful time, when hope walks, like an angel, at its side, and all things have their freshness and their charm. There appears so much to enjoy, that the only question is, what to enjoy first? But this period, brief enough with every one, had been unusually brief with Ethel Churchill. It now was like a dream to her that she had ever looked forward. "Sufficient for the day is the evil thereof," is above all the motto of disappointment. At first she was reluctant to visit; she shrank, with morbid weakness, from the idea of meeting Mr. Courtenaye; but this she had hitherto escaped, he having been sent on a confidential mission to Paris. She went out, night after night, because it was less exertion to go out, than to refuse the kindness that forced on her the unwelcome amusement. When a day was over, she was glad, and yet there was nothing that she anticipated on the morrow. But Ethel's was a nature essentially unfitted to the cold and glittering life of society; gentle, timid, and dependent, her world was in the affections; those blighted and destroyed, existence was a blank, nothing remained wherewith to fill up the weary void.

The intercourse between her and Lady Marchmont was constant and affectionate, yet there was but little confidence. They were too different: Ethel had not Henrietta's information, nor her talents; and Henrietta scarcely comprehended the want of them. Lady Marchmont was now in the most brilliant hour of her life; her reputation for beauty, wit, and fashion, was firmly established. Her very caprices were pronounced charming; her slightest phrase was called a *bon-mot*; wherever she went, she was followed and flattered; and her whole existence seemed

e up of praise and pleasure. With all that, there was that perpetual fever of the heart which broke out sometimes in petulance, sometimes in sarcasm; all admitted that her ship was very unequal, but very brilliant; even her rudeness passed only for "pretty nny's way."

It is strange what society will endure from dolls. Henrietta had too much vanity not to ke the homage that surrounded her; still was too shrewd not to see through it, and pined for something better. Between Lord Marchmont and herself the distance became greater every day; she despised him, he disliked her; ay, *disliked*, for we hate superiority which we only acknowledge shyly. Henrietta would have loved any whom she could have admired; admiration is the divinest privilege of a high and rous nature like hers; it is the smaller meaner kind who look down, but in her and there was not one redeeming point:

"The head was vacant, and the heart was cold."

It is lovely and neglected wife was in the painful and the most dangerous situation woman. Only her vanity was cultivated—the mind had no employ, and the affections were left to waste.

CHAPTER LXXVIII.

RANELAGH.

I did not wish to see his face,
I knew it could not be;
Though a look had not alter'd there,
What once it was to me.

Since last we met, a fairy spell
Had been from each removed;
How strange it is that those can change,
Who were so much beloved!

It is a bitter thing to know
The heart's enchantment o'er;
But 'tis more bitter still to feel
It can be charm'd no more!

So I hear," said Lady Mary, "that, 'seen in youthful beauty,' you have driven any of your lovers to despair; but it really too bad to hand over all Lord Portsea's s and darts to Mrs. Fane, persuading her she was the rightful owner of the scented l."

"I am sure," replied Lady Marchmont, "that she was delighted to receive it. I hate waste things wasted, and it was utterly ed on me; but you are wrong as to the of the billet; it was placed in my bouquet for Lord Harvey."

"Lord Harvey!" exclaimed the other, with expression of anger she could not at once nise. The fact was, that, for some time

Lady Mary Wortley had considered Harvey as her own especial property. Nothing is more provoking to a woman a lover's infidelity; it is a wrong which s her without even the satisfaction of ige. His very infidelity shows that she ost her power; and without power, where venge? A sneer is some comfort; and,

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fate be praised! there is always a good-natured friend to repeat it. "Well," said she, "Lord Harvey is doing his best to find if there be a 'yes' in the world. It would require—what is that rule in arithmetic? ah!—long division, to reckon up the number of refusals he has had this season! However, I suppose,

'Though I miss the sweet possessing,
'Tis a pleasure to adore;
Hope, the wretch's only blessing,
May in time procure me more.'

"I cannot," returned Lady Marchmont, "answer by your next verse:—

'Constant courtship may obtain her,
When both wit and merit fall;
And the lucky minute gain her,
Fate and fancy will prevail.'

There is to me that insipidity about Lord Harvey, which always belongs to the forced and artificial. He takes as much pains to make up a character as Lady Clevedon does to make up her face!"

Lady Mary turned pettishly away; no woman likes anybody but herself to depreciate a lover; it is personally an ill compliment. But Lady Marchmont had little time to speculate on the causes of Lady Mary's petulance; for, at that moment, she felt Miss Churchill's clasp on her arm tighter, while the slight frame she supported trembled with agitation. Her quick eye detected the cause in a moment; Mr. Courtenaye had just entered the room, though he had not as yet perceived them. Indeed, the position in which Ethel stood effectually screened her from observation; and Henrietta thought she could not do better than stand as they were, thus giving her companion time to recover her outward composure.

In the mean time, Mr. Courtenaye had caught sight of the countess, and came eagerly forward to speak. She was delighted to renew the acquaintance; for, in her own mind, she had already arranged to what it was to lead. The crowd, which had been collecting for the last hour, had now become exceedingly dense, and a sudden movement forcing Lady Marchmont forward, separated her from her friend. Norbourne did not see her face, but saw that a young woman was placed in a very embarrassing situation; offered, or rather drew her arm within his own. She was so situated, that it was impossible to refuse; the crowd still pressed upon them; their eyes met, and to both it seemed like a dream. Neither even attempted speaking; but, though Norbourne felt the arm he held tremble, Ethel was more composed than her once lover. She had pride and indignation to sustain her, while he was divided between embarrassment and an overpowering sensation of delight at meeting again. The face was intentionally averted, but there was the same sweet profile, and the long lash of the downcast eye lay golden on a cheek crimson with emotion. They reached the door before he summoned resolution to speak; but, just as the words rose from his heart to his lip, Ethel, by a sudden effort, caught Lady Marchmont's arm, and whispered, "For God's

sake, let us go home!" Henrietta saw her uncontrollable emotion, and instantly complied with her wish: Courtenaye handed them to the carriage.

How long, that night, did the light touch of Ethel's little hand linger in his own! He felt anxious, but happy; he had seen her, and every thing seemed possible; she would, she must, forgive him. But Ethel sought her own room with a bitter and burning heart: she gave way to a burst of passionate tears.

"What!" exclaimed she, "am I still so weak? How I despise myself!"

She rose, and paced the room impatiently; pride, love, and the bitter sense of injury, contending together. Again she resumed her seat; again gave way to weeping, that brought no relief.

"O that," cried Ethel, wringing her hands, "I may never, never see him again!"

CHAPTER LXXIX.

THE INFLUENCE OF AN INVITATION.

Life is so little in its vanities,
So mean, and looking to such worthless aim,
Truly the dust, of which we are a part,
Predominates amid mortality.
Great crimes have something of nobility;
Mighty their warning, vast is their remorse:
But these small faults, that make one-half of life
Belong to lowest natures, and reduce
To their own wretched level nobler things.

LADY MARCHMONT was listlessly turning over the praises of her beauty, duly set forth by heroic verse in a poem just dedicated to her, when there came one of those solemn raps at the door, which she well knew announced Lord Marchmont. An expression of disgust passed over her features, and a slight elevation of the shoulders accompanied the answer, "Come in!" His lordship made his appearance; and there was a look as nearly approaching to anxiety as his immovable face could well convey. He inquired after her ladyship's health with an unusual air of *empressement*.

"But I need not ask," added he, "for I never saw you looking so lovely. Ah! I see that you are yourself the subject of your studies; you must permit me to read your praises to you."

He took up the book, and began to read the commonplace compliments it contained with a solemn and emphatic air, which, if possible, added to their absurdity. Lady Marchmont looked what she was—thoroughly bored; fortunately, her husband soon held that he had played the agreeable quite long enough; and, nothing doubting his success, thought it was the very time to introduce what was the real object of his visit.

"I hear," said he, "that the preparations for the *fête* Sir Robert Walpole is about to give at Chelsea, are on a scale of unusual magnificence!"

"Are they?" replied Lady Marchmont.

"He intends," continued his lordship, "to

give a dinner, a tea-party, a ball, and supper!"

"Does he?" replied Henrietta.

"Why you answer," exclaimed her husband, pettishly, "as if you did not care about the matter?"

"I do not care!" was the answer.

"Now really," returned he, "that is carrying conjugal obedience too far. I can assure you, that I do not expect a pretty woman like yourself to be indifferent to a ball, though it be given by the minister!"

Finding that this compliment was received in silence, he went on:—

"Now, own the truth,—are you not very sorry that my having been in the opposition precludes your going to the most brilliant *fête* of the season?"

"I cannot be sorry," replied she, "for what I do not care the least about!"

"Ah!" returned her husband, "I know candour is not a feminine accomplishment: but what would you say if I told you that you might go?"

"Why I should say," answered Henrietta, "that I shall not be asked!"

"But you can easily procure an invitation," said Lord Marchmont, who now succeeded in making his wife at least look astonished. "In short," continued he, assuming an air of mystery, "many circumstances have occurred lately that give me a very different view of things to what I had formerly. I believe Sir Robert Walpole to have been a most misrepresented man: I owe him some atonement; my sense of justice dictates it: I mean to go to his *fête*!"

"Do you?" was the brief answer.

"Yes, I feel that I ought; and with me, to feel that I ought to do a thing, is to do it!" added he, looking quite Roman with excess of virtue.

He was obliged, however, to be content with his own applause, for his wife remained silent; and, after a pause of conscious self-satisfaction, he continued:—

"I do not expect you to comprehend my motives."

"I am glad," said Henrietta, quietly, "that you do not expect impossibilities!"

"O, no!" said he, with a most imperturbable air, "I always make allowance for feminine weakness; I do not expect your mind to follow mine!"

"Now, the Fates forbid that it should!" thought Henrietta.

"I am aware," Lord Marchmont proceeded to say, "of my own political importance, and I have been wrong in allowing my personal feeling to the prince to bias my conduct; but every day shows more the weakness of Frederick's character. I cannot serve him and my country; I shall, therefore, go to Sir Robert's *fête*!"

"A most proper and patriotic resolve!" replied the countess: "I only see one objection—"

"O, you find some objection to any thing that I propose!" interrupted her husband:

ould I not go, if I please, to Sir Rol-
l?"

," answered Henrietta, "that you
an invitation!"

ll be very easy," persisted his lord-
obtain one."

so very easy," replied she: "why,
tions are as much canvassed for, as a
urliament!"

greater the difficulty, the greater the
n procuring one: that triumph I re-
you," said her husband, bowing with
of conjugal gallantry.

ne!" cried Henrietta, with unqualifi-
se.

will readily suppose," replied Lord
nt, resuming all his solemnity, "that
ropose a plan, without having duly
d the most eligible method of carry-
execution. I have designed, it re-
you to execute!"

tta gave a silent bow of inquiry.

aware," continued her husband,
favourite you are with Lord Nor-
I am not jealous, as I know it is on
ter's account. What a melancholy
death was! such a pity she should
before this *fête*! You can make
le allusion to your friendship for
ask Lord Norbourne to procure us

not like to ask him," said Lady
nt.

! of course, you like nothing that I
' interrupted his lordship. "I re-
ver, that you will attend to my
s, not to your own capricious likings
rings!"

I obey, my lord," replied Henrietta,
ock-tragedy air.

Marchmont rose from his seat, saying,
you fully understand the importance
ission. It is no trifle to have my
adhesion to give in: you will be a
visiter!"

not doubt it!" said Henrietta.

had better complete your toilette, for
dered the carriage: I never neglect
:" and, with these words, his lord-
ed out of the room.

w Lord Norbourne's kindness," said
, "or I would have refused, point
wonder what has occasioned this
range: but of what use is it hunting
motive, too small to discover."

CHAPTER LXXX.

ASKING FOR AN INVITATION.

s a weary and a wretched life,
nothing to redeem it but the heart.
ion, earth's great purifier, stirs
embers into flame, and that ascends.
er natures walk this bitter world
a while, then Heaven asks its own,
re can but remember and regret.

MARCHMONT's name procured her in-
tittance; and Lord Norbourne came

down to hand her from the carriage, and take
her to his own room.

"I find," said he, "that my curiosity,
which was up in arms when your card was
brought, is quite lost in the pleasure of seeing
you. I shall not allow you to tell me your
business for a long time."

"I am in no hurry," said Henrietta, smil-
ing; while her eye, glancing round the room,
caught sight of Constance's picture. "How
like, how very like!" exclaimed she, approach-
ing it, partly to conceal her emotion.

"It is," said Lord Norbourne, "such a
comfort, and such a companion."

"She looks like what she was, an angel!"
exclaimed the countess, earnestly. "I never
knew any one who did me so much good. I
grew better while she was with me. O, Lord
Norbourne! I felt her loss and yours deeply
at the time: but I have felt it more bitterly
since. My poor uncle—," but she could not
finish the sentence; and the tears she could
not restrain, entirely overpowered her. "I
wish," exclaimed she, in broken sobs, "that I
had died instead of Constance!"

"My dear child," said Lord Norbourne,
"you are too young, and should be too happy,
for such a wish."

"I am not happy," she replied; "in losing
my uncle, I lost the only human being who
really cared for me. You cannot think how
weary I am of the heartless, useless life that I
lead. I wish I had been your daughter: I
should have had some one to look up to, and
to love. Ah, the lot of Constance was far
happier than we deem!"

"I believe it was," replied Lord Norbourne,
kindly taking his companion's hand. "I have
learnt to think of my loss with a sadness that
soothes me. I turn to her image when over-
fretted with worldly cares. I hope almost as
she hoped for our reunion."

"I cannot tell you," continued Henrietta,
"how often I think of her. Perhaps, from
being the only objects of my affections that I
ever lost, her idea and that of my uncle are
singularly blended together. Ah, we never
know how dearly we loved our friends until
the grave has closed over them."

Lord Norbourne would then fain have said
something to comfort her, but even he could
think of nothing. All consolations appear
commonplace in the presence of a great sor-
row. For other griefs there are many pleas
to urge for forgetfulness; but to urge upon us
the forgetfulness of the dead, seems like pro-
fanation of their sad and sacred memory. Lord
Norbourne, too, was touched by the confidence
reposed in him. He knew Lord Marchmont,
and felt how utterly his wife was thrown
away upon him; and yet it was a sort of un-
happiness to which it was impossible to al-
lude, and still more impossible to redress.

"Yet who would believe," exclaimed he,
half-thinking, aloud, "to see you sometimes
so brilliant, and, seemingly, so gay, that the
envied and flattered Lady Marchmont knew
the bitterness of regret, or the darkness of
despondency?"

"Ah," replied she, "life is very inconsistent. We contradict each other; still more do we contradict ourselves. It seems to me as if there were a perpetual warfare going on between the outward and the inner world. Nothing is really what it appears to be; and this is what discourages me more than I can express—the not knowing to what I may trust, and my utter inability to discern between that which is, and that which only seems."

"Half the misery in this life," returned Lord Norbourne, "originates in its falsehood. We conceal our thoughts and our feelings, till, even to ourselves, they become confused; and half our time is spent in fretting and feverish attempts to disentangle the webs we have woven: and the strange thing is, that all this dissimulation is unnecessary; we should have done far better without it."

"What a small, worthless thing," exclaimed Henrietta, "is our existence, filled with mean envyings, paltry hopes! and, if for one instant redeemed by a true affection, or a generous emotion, what wretchedness is sure to follow the indulgence of either!"

"You must not come to me," answered her listener, "for a defence of society; I have long since loathed its bitterness as much as I despise its baseness. You cannot know the miserably mean motives that actuate the generality; but the trifles so sought give their own narrowness to the mind."

"And that brings me at once," interrupted Henrietta, "to the object of my visit; the motives, however, being supposed to lie too deep for my feminine apprehension. Guess what brings me here."

"Nay," replied her companion, "what have I done for you to presuppose such a want of gallantry, as to imagine that I would attempt to guess a lady's secret before she thought proper to communicate it?"

"It is not interesting enough," answered she, "for me to make a mystery of it: but the fact is, that Lord Marchmont has either caught cold by sitting on the opposition benches, or thinks that nothing but his own personal experience can decide whether Sir Robert's cook exceeds his own—a subject on which I have lately heard him express much anxiety. He has suddenly discovered that England owes every thing to the present administration, which he has henceforth resolved to support with both vote and voice."

"We shall be glad of the vote," replied Lord Norbourne, "though we would dispense with the voice."

"I fear me," answered the countess, "that you must take your bargain 'for better or worse.' But I have not yet arrived at my business. There is a condition annexed to the proposed alliance."

"Something very unreasonable, I suppose," cried Lord Norbourne. "Is it a marquise, or the next vacant riband?"

"Your conjectures are not what yours generally have the reputation of being; but wide, indeed, of the mark. However, if your

penetration be at fault, you will at least have the satisfaction of establishing your theory of small motives."

"Well," said he, "let me hear what bribe (I beg pardon for the word) is to win over our potent ally."

"Only," replied Lady Marchmont, "an invitation to Sir Robert's *fête* at Chelsea."

"An invitation!" exclaimed Lord Norbourne,—"he shall have a dozen if he please. I will take care that the tickets are duly forwarded this afternoon."

"Many thanks for your kindness," said she, rising from her seat. "Ah, Lord Norbourne! you do not know how to grant favours: you have not made me feel awkward or embarrassed in the least. I really do not hate you for having obliged me."

Lord Norbourne laughed, and took her hand to lead her to the carriage.

"By the way," said he, as they were descending the staircase, "how is your beautiful friend, Miss Churchill? and, speaking of so great an ornament to a ball-room, you must allow me to send her a card together with your own."

"You are too kind," exclaimed Henrietta, delighted.

"O, no; I am only selfish," returned Lord Norbourne. "I shall expect a vote of thanks from Sir Robert for my beauties."

"I shall do nothing for the next week but study my costume and complexion," said she. "Ethel and myself will consider our conquests as proper compliments to your kindness."

"Ah! as to your charming self," replied he,

"The world is all before you where to choose;"

but, do you know, I am rather inclined to limit the sphere of Miss Churchill's fascination. It has already, unless I am greatly mistaken, produced due effect on Norbourne; and, of course, I am in his interests."

"Well, I promise you to circumscribe her conquests as much as possible by extending my own," returned Henrietta. "It will be an easy task; for Miss Churchill does not do 'the honours of her eyes.' I often tell her her beauty is quite wasted upon her."

"Not wasted," said her companion, "if it do but procure for her the true allegiance of one affectionate heart; and I know Norbourne too well not to know how safely he may be trusted even with the happiness of another."

"This is as much as to say," thought Lady Marchmont, when seated in the carriage, "Lord Norbourne is quite prepared to give his consent to his nephew's marrying again. Well, I hope that Ethel will recover her bloom and spirits: if there is such a thing as happiness in this wide and weary world, it is before her now. I wish I could anticipate things as eagerly as I used to do; but, alas! scarcely any thing seems worth anticipating; or if some fair hope arise upon the distance, it is too good to be true."

CHAPTER LXXXI.

THE FÊTE AT SIR ROBERT WALPOLE'S.

Few, save the poor, feel for the poor;
The rich know not how hard
It is to be of needful food
And needful rest debar'd.

Their paths are paths of plenteousness,
They sleep on silk and down;
And never think how heavily
The weary head lies down.

They know not of the scanty meal,
With small pale faces round;
No fire upon the cold damp hearth
When snow is on the ground.

They never by the window lean,
And see the gay pass by;
Then take their weary task again,
But with a sadder eye.

THERE is no denying that there are "royal;" through existence for the upper classes; them, at least, the highways are macadamed, swept, and watered. They are surrounded not only by luxuries, but by pleasures, and, at all events to the young, must have lost of novelty. It seems to me the verifallacy to say that the lots in life are weighed out in equal balances: the difference is very great—to the examiner, sad; and to sufferer, bitter! Before we talk of equality of pain, which is, in nine cases out of ten, a selfish and indolent excuse for neglect, we contrast a high and a low position together. On one side is protection, instruction and pleasure; on the other is neglect, want and hardship. Here, wants are needed to become luxuries; there, "hunger lows all in one low want." Among the body and mind are cultivated with equal helpfulness; among the poor, the body is to disease and to decrepitude, and the mind to void and destruction. I grant that I look of the two extremes; but it is the worst of social existence that there should be extremes.

The child of the rich man sleeps in the cradle, his little cries are hushed by the nurse, whose only duty is to watch the progress of that tiny frame. The least illness, the physician bestows on the infant his knowledge of a life; for every single pain benefits by all his predecessors. The child becomes a boy: Eton or Westminster, Oxford or Cambridge, have garnered for him the wisdom of centuries: he is launched on public life, and there are friends and patrons on either hand, as steppingstones in his way. He arrives at old age: the armistice is ready, and the old port has been long in the cellars of his country-house to share strength with its master. He dies; his coffin is comfortable; the very vault of his ancestors is sheltered; a funeral sermon is preached in his honour; and escutcheon and family tablet do their best to preserve his story.

Take the reverse of the picture. The infancy of the poor child is one of cries, too many of blows; natural affection has given before the iron pressure of want. The

old proverb, that, "When poverty comes in at the door, love flies out at the window," is true in a far more general sense than the one in which it is generally applied. They have the floor for a bed; the scant and mouldering remnant of food for dinner; the cold hearth, where the wind blows in the snow;—these physical sufferings react on the moral world, they deaden and embitter the sweetest of our feelings. The parent half loves, half loathes, the child that takes the bread from his own mouth; and the child looks on that as tyranny, which is only misery. It learns to fear before it learns to love.

Suppose such a childhood past: it has escaped disease; no chance chill has distorted the youthful limbs, they have, at least, health to begin life. The poor man has nothing more than his strength. God's best gifts lie dormant within him: the chances are that he cannot read even the holy page, that, at least, holds out the hope of a less miserable world. He has not that mental cultivation which alone teaches us what are our resources, and how to husband or to exert them. He knows only how to labour, and that not in the most serviceable manner to himself. He does not, even when he can, which is rare enough, lay by for the future, because he has never been accustomed to reflect. Life has for him no future. Perhaps he takes to drinking; and it is easy, with half-a-dozen different kinds of French wines on the table, the claret purple beside the golden sherry, to say a thousand true and excellent things on the crime of excess. If the gentleman refrains, it is from a moral restraint the poor man has never been taught to exercise; and what does the poor man drink to avoid—cold, hunger, perhaps bodily pain—always bodily weariness?

Old age comes on feeble, and often premature, when his place of refuge is a straw pallet, where, if his family keep him, it is an act of Roman virtue, the very devotion of duty and affection; for even the old man's morsel must be taken from their own. But the workhouse is the ordinary resting-place before the grave; and there human selfishness takes its most revolting aspect; there life has not left one illusion, one affection: all is harsh, cold, revolting, and unnatural. The difference that began in the cradle continues to the tomb. The bare coffin, a few boards hastily nailed together, is flung into the earth; the service is hurried over, the ground trodden down, and the next day the children are playing upon the new grave, whose tenant is already forgotten. So much for the equality of human existence.

But the *fête* of to-day belonged to a different order of things. Luxury, aided by refinement, gave every grace to the external world, at least. Villas are, I believe, a delightful invention of the Romans, who set very seriously about enjoying the world they had conquered. Sir Robert's villa would have done honour to Lucullus, who has always appeared to me the most thoroughbred gentleman of antiquity. Alcibiades was a happy union of coxcomb and conqueror; but there was in him a want of

that repose, and of that superb self-reliance, which characterizes the Roman. The climate and the scenery of England are admirably adapted to the perfection of a villa. The great charm of our landscapes is their colouring—so quiet, yet so refreshing. The fine old trees, and the fine old tree standing by itself, are peculiar to our fields; the rich sweep of grass so vividly green, the prodigality of garden flowers, and a sky whose intense blue owes the depth of its purple to the white clouds which float above in broken masses,—all these belong to a style of natural beauty which is entirely English. It is connected only with enjoyment; nothing startles as in the vast precipices of Switzerland; nothing brings the past too vividly to mind as in the sad, though lovely ruins of Greece: all is tranquil, and redolent of summer. It is the cultivated, rather than the artificial; just enough of nature for all the purposes of art.

CHAPTER LXXXII.

THE FETE AT SIR ROBERT WALPOLE'S CONTINUED.

Lady, thy white brow is fair,
Beauty's morning light is there;
And thine eye is like a star,
Dark as those of midnight are:
Round thee satin robe is flung;
Pearls upon thy neck are hung:
Yet thou wearest silk and gem,
As thou hadst forgotten them.
Lovelier is the ray that lies
On thy lip, and in thine eyes.

Nothing more strongly marks the insufficiency of luxuries than the ease with which people grow accustomed to them; they are rather known by their want than by their presence. The word "*blase*" has been coined expressly for the use of the upper classes.

Lady Marchmont had acquired much of that languid indifference, the most foreign to her temperament, by the want of something really to interest her. She had grown careless to observe, yet even she was quite animated into admiration by the beauty of the garden as she entered. The turf short, but not too short, fresh without being damp, sloped down to the river; sometimes golden green in the sunshine, at others darkly green in the shade. The beds were filled with flowers of every kind, and stands were scattered around of rare and costly plants. Groups of the young and beautiful were mingled among them, and the rich colouring of the period's costume was relieved by the verdant foliage. It was a pretty contrast between nature and art.

"Well," exclaimed Lady Marchmont, breathing the perfume with which a honeysuckle, wound around an old ash, filled the air, "I do confess that I like common flowers better than any. The hothouse plant has no associations."

"And I," interrupted Lord Marchmont, "*infinitely* prefer exotics: they show that *some trouble has been taken* on our account.

But, talking of trouble, I wish, instead of lingering here, you would come and pay your respects to Sir Robert."

Sir Robert stood to receive his guests on the portico, which gave a pleasant shelter and coolness to the front of the house. A large hall, filled with odiferous shrubs, opened behind, and gave a fine view of the river and the opposite bank. Sir Robert was now at the very summit of worldly prosperity. He stood fast in the king's favour; and what, under the rose, was of far more consequence, in the queen's. There was peace abroad, and a ministerial majority in the house at home. In short, the old Scotch secretary, Johnstone, might well put the question to his master, which he had asked that very morning,—*"O, sir, what have you done to God Almighty, to make him so much your friend?"*

Henrietta could not help shivering at the air of solemn submission that Lord Marchmont assumed as he ascended the steps of the terrace. In anybody else she would have smiled; but the absurdity of your husband comes too close for laughter, it may reflect a little on yourself—at all events on your taste for choosing him.

"Ah, my fair petitioners," said Sir Robert, with great good humour, as they approached; "I see that you are resolved on being revenged by looking to killing. Lord Marchmont, how do you justify to your conscience having married such universal destruction?" Lord Marchmont began a long speech, of which honour, and conviction, and his country's good, were the only words audible; for a fresh party distracted Sir Robert's attention, and Lord Norbourne came to the rescue, and, offering Lady Marchmont his arm, proposed a walk through the grounds. Now this was an agreeable arrangement to all. Miss Churchill cared little who her companion was; and Lord Marchmont's small vanity was flattered by being an escort to a beauty, who, moreover, was a silent, if not an attentive listener; while his wife, besides preferring any company to that of her husband, really liked Lord Norbourne. The last two, however, had each a little motive of their own. Lord Norbourne wished to stay with the party till his nephew arrived, fully intending then to monopolize Lord Marchmont, and thus to leave Ethel to Courtenay. Lady Marchmont wished to have a nearer view of a singularly handsome young man, who seemed perfectly lost in the admiration she inspired. His appearance was very distinguished, and yet she did not know him: he must be new to society, to give way to any feeling so openly and so naively. The crowd had carried him forcibly with them; and Henrietta found that she had a sudden curiosity to inspect a gum cistus which was blowing at the end of the walk. The result of her inspection was not quite satisfactory, for the stranger had disappeared. But the next crowded walk turned out better: again she beheld those dark and eloquent eyes fixed upon herself, as if unconscious of any thing else in the world. A knot of acquaintances shut him

it from sight, and Henrietta had never before thought it so tiresome to listen to news and uttery. Lord Norbourn was the next person detained; but his companion found the play more agreeable, though, perhaps, to the ill as dangerous as delays proverbially are. "Do not," exclaimed a voice, whose deep melody was remarkable, "ask me about Versailles, every thing was tiresome there, even the love-making; but I remember nothing about it. I can think only of that divine *ce*."

What instinct told Lady Marchmont that the speaker meant her own? Some reply was made, and the voice continued:

"My whole existence is passed into my *res*; and here I am wasting my time in talking to you, when I might be looking at *er*."

The laurel branches were put aside, and the handsome stranger stepped from the shade. His eyes met those of Lady Marchmont, who hid herself colour, and then, angry at having done so, began talking hastily to the first person near. She talked without waiting for an answer, startling the elderly gentleman she addressed by the suddenness of her questions; and then half affronting him by not listening to the whole of his reply. But she was in the fashion, and the first privilege of fashion impudence. Her companion, on second thoughts, only felt flattered by her speaking to him at all. When her party next moved, she unconsciously she looked towards the laurel, but the place was vacant.

CHAPTER LXXXIII.

It matters not its history—Love has wings,
Like lightning, swift and fatal; and it springs,
Like a wild flower, where it is least expected;
Existing, whether cherished or rejected.

A mystery art thou!—thou mighty one!
We speak thy name in beauty; yet we shun
To say thou art our guest; for who will own
His life thy empire, and his heart thy throne?

There was an absolute mixture of pique and disappointment as Lady Marchmont passed on; but they had scarcely reached the open lawn before she saw the stranger talking to Lady Mary Wortley Montague, who was smiling her very sweetest, and, worse, looking her very best. An ill defined dislike, a little like jealousy, arose in Henrietta's mind; a little, however, mitigated by observing that the gentleman instantly caught sight of herself; and that, when not absolutely forced to look at his companion, he looked towards her. Suddenly the two approached, and Lady Mary said, with forced smile,

"Will you allow me to present Sir George Kingston to you?—the most accomplished equet that ever

'Dealt destruction round the land
On all he judged a foe;'

under which denomination he ranks all women."

"Poets excel in *fiction*," said Sir George,

with a quiet, almost timid, manner, "and Lady Mary is a poet: but, as we never forgive being bored, let me entreat her to talk to Lady Marchmont of some more amusing subject than myself."

"I can assure you," continued Lady Mary, "you meet on equal terms; you cannot be worse than Lady Marchmont:—"

'Her eyes, like suns, the rash beholders strike;
But, like the sun, they shine on all alike,'

excepting her husband, of course."

Henrietta looked more vexed than the commonplace sneer needed, and which Sir George did not appear to hear. He was surrounded by some friends, all of whom seemed delighted to see him once more in England. A turn in the walk shut him out; and Henrietta began to think what a tiresome thing a *fête* is, and to wonder that people ever gave them. She also began to enumerate the number of hours she should have to stay; and to think that it was very unreasonable, even in a prime minister, to give a breakfast, dinner, and tea-party, all in one day, to say nothing of the night itself being treasured upon by a ball. Lord Norbourn's attention, too, was more taken up than it ought to have been with the beauty of the *fête* on his arm; but, alas! he knew everybody, and everybody knew him: public characters must pay the penalty of greatness.

Henrietta was now all but surrounded by a mob of elderly gentlemen, ribanded and starred; and on the other side was the trunk of a huge cedar tree. Her prospects might have been more agreeable. However, the very cedar, which, in the first instance, she had ungraciously denominated "odious," improved upon acquaintance.

Not exactly like a hamadryad emerging from the trunk, but stepping very gracefully from behind it, Sir George Kingston made his appearance. "Desperate circumstances," exclaimed he, "justify desperate conduct. Poets lay it down as a rule, that deities are not to extricate a hero from his embarrassment unless there remain no human method of extricating him. Now, nothing short of a divinity can aid me. May I appeal to her aid?"

"At all events," replied Lady Marchmont, "my curiosity is engaged on your side; and if only one-half of what is said of women be true, that is quite enough to decide in your favour."

"I take you for my confidant at once," replied Sir George; "but, do you know that it will entail upon you, at least, ten minutes' patient listening?"

"I feel equal to the exertion," said Henrietta.

"Will you then allow me to offer you my arm? for, I frankly confess that my disclosure is meant for your ear alone."

Henrietta took his arm, but coloured as she did so; why she coloured, she could not have told herself. They turned into the next walk; and, in spite of both curiosity and confidence, they proceeded, for some distance, in perfect

silence. It was very pleasant, however; and not the less so for a little touch of awkwardness. At last, Lady Marchmont arrived at the conclusion that something ought to be said; and, turning to her companion, exclaimed,—

"Let no one ever again talk of feminine impatience; but I really can be an angel no longer, so let me have the full benefit of all the ideas I have given you such ample time to collect."

He started as if from a reverie. "Lady Marchmont must be so much accustomed to have every thing forgotten when she is by, that she will pardon it quite as matter of habit," was the answer: "but I must not trespass too far on your forbearance. Miss Churchill is very intimate with you, is she not?"

Henrietta felt disappointed, though she could have given as little cause for her disappointment as for her previous blush.

"Miss Churchill is," replied she, "my most intimate friend."

"Perhaps, then," exclaimed Sir George, "you will save me a task to which my courage is not equal. Will you allow me to communicate to you the disagreeable mission which I have incautiously undertaken?"

"What is the matter?—yes; pray, tell me first," interrupted Henrietta, now all anxiety on Ethel's account.

"Miss Churchill is very beautiful?" asked he.

"The loveliest creature on which the sun ever shone!"

Sir George Kingston looked at his companion as if he did not quite agree with her; and, though he only looked his doubt, Henrietta felt the full compliment of the look; again she coloured, and said hastily,—“But do tell me. Ethel is as dear to me as a sister.”

"Do not laugh at me," said her companion, in a low, earnest tone, "if I confess I cannot understand inconstancy in love. I told Trevanion I was the worst person in the world that he could employ: from me he must expect no defence of his conduct."

"Mr. Trevanion!" cried Lady Marchmont; "do only tell me that he is married, and I shall be eternally grateful to you."

"It is precisely," replied the other, "the fact of his marriage that I was about to communicate."

"You are the most charming person in the world. You are invested with a perfect halo of delight," exclaimed Henrietta. "Miss Churchill has some chimerical notion of honour in her head, but that is over now; your information does not leave a single obstacle in the way of the most perfect happiness that ever wound up a fairy tale. We must find Miss Churchill, and tell her; but I claim the privilege of being told all about it as we go."

"I may as well use Trevanion's own words," replied Sir George. "‘I have no choice,’ said he, gazing, despairingly, in the glass: ‘one heart I must break. Now that

of Miss Churchill being at a distance, and that of Mademoiselle de Nargis being at my side, the last is most important—I married this morning. Let my lovely Ethel know the fact as gently as possible: lay the blame on fate, not on my falsehood. Tell her, if she die, her memory will be enshrined in my heart.’"

"That certainly was a consolation," said Lady Marchmont. "The fact is, that the marriage between Mr. Trevanion and Miss Churchill was a family affair, arranged without the slightest regard to the young lady's feelings, which Mr. Trevanion well knew were interested by another."

A sudden turn in the walk brought them face to face with Lord Marchmont and Ethel, to whom the countess whispered a few words in a low voice. A flush of pleasure came over the listener's face.

"Trevanion," exclaimed Sir George, "might have spared all his anxiety on Miss Churchill's account. She looks as if the news were only too good to be true."

CHAPTER LXXXIV.

THE FETE.

Not to the present is our hour confined,
The great and shadowy future is assigned
To be the glorious empire of the mind.

The past was once the future and it wrought
In the high presence of on-looking thought;
All that we have, was by its efforts brought.

To-day creates to-morrow, and the tree
Of good or ill grows in past hours, what we
Make for the future—certain is to be.

THE superb banquet that had been laid out for the queen, was over. For once opinion had been unanimous even about an act of Sir Robert's. The royal party had dined in the greenhouse, the *coup d'œil* of which was as striking as it was new. Vast stands of the most costly exotics reached to the glass roof, which was partly covered by a luxuriant vine, or by a small scarlet creeper. Set in arches of the most beautiful flowers, but with colours that bore comparison even with those of nature, were hung pictures of the old masters. Sir Robert Walpole was, like Cardinal Mazarin, a great collector of paintings. In both, the love of art was the only glimpse of the ideal, the one single touch of the imaginative.

There never was a nature less allied to the poetical or to the picturesque than Sir Robert's. It never could have entered his head to clothe

"The palpable and the familiar
With the golden exhalations from the dawn."

His highest idea of inspiration was that—

"——— Pégase est un cheval
Qui mène les grands hommes à l'hôpital."

His perceptions were cold, clear, and defined; he never went beyond the actual, though that he took in at a glance. His contempt for mankind grew out of never looking beyond what he saw: now the smallest of human motives are what lie on the surface. It encour-

rages us to be thought a little better than what we are; but Sir Robert's system made no allowances,—it took a low view of the intellectual world, but a still lower of the moral. There was no excitement, no belief, no generous impulse about it. He would have erected no glorious monument to the past, to serve as oracle and incentive to the future. We can imagine his enjoying the pointed and polished satire of Pope; though we can also imagine him saying, "Of what use is it to tell men of their faults, they never mend them?" But how impossible it would be to suppose him entering, for one instant, into the wide and benevolent philosophy of Wordsworth, a philosophy founded on belief in good.

Yet the actual never quite suffices to the mind; and even with the shrewd, the practical Sir Robert, the imagination opened one sunny vista, in which he saw visions and dreamed dreams. To know what passed through his mind, what train of thoughts were conjured up while watching the quiet loveliness of a Claude, or the spiritual beauty of a Raphael, would be a curious study: but the guests he had now assembled were intent on no such curious speculations; they were quite content with the external, without examining into the interior, world.

It would have been difficult to have imagined a scene more like one in fairyland, than the scene as the guests again dispersed through the grounds. The sunset had been magnificent, and the Thames was floating in dark radiance; the waves wearing that transparent clearness, which gives more the idea of melted beryl, than aught else: every little circle in the water had that trembling light which characterizes precious stones. The atmosphere was unusually clear, as if loath to part with the daylight; but the moon, like a round of lucid snow, had risen on the sky; and a pale, soft gleam, came from the lamps amid the foliage.

One device obtained great admiration: small lights were scattered on the ground, in some of the winding paths of turf, to emulate glow-worms. The principal band was placed in the great hall; which, splendidly lighted up, and hung with blue damask, whose festoons were fastened back with wreaths of flowers, was thrown open for the dancers. But strains of music came from every part of the grounds; and on the river was a boat, filled with wind instruments, whose soft aerial melody floated in at every pause.

The beauty of the evening had little attraction to Lord Marchmont, who was in the card-room, devoting all his energies to the whist-table. Lady Marchmont was wandering about the gardens with Sir George Kingston, and Lord Norbourne had taken charge of Miss Churchill.

Ethel was more than usually depressed; the gayety around made her shrink into herself; she had no sympathy with it; it only made her think, more and more, how the spring of happiness was dead within her: she had no real enjoyment in any thing. The

forced gayety which society exacts as its false and weary tribute, only fatigued, without exciting her. She went out, in the vain hope that, leaving behind the solitude of home, she could leave, too, the perpetual presence which there haunted her. Ethel soon found that change of place was not change of thought, and the very effort fretted her with a feverish discontent. It was a constant labour to keep her attention to what was said; however, Lord Norbourne set down her silence to a graceful timidity, and only waited an opportunity to effect a change he had meditated from the first. It soon came: as they were on their way to a transparency of their majesties, not a little larger than life—with Bellona, in a very handsome helmet, on one side, and Peace, with a cornucopia and a full blown wreath of roses, on the other—the path was interrupted by a little knot of gentlemen.

"How very fortunate!" exclaimed Lord Norbourne. "Townshend, I have been wanting, all day, to say a few words to you! Miss Churchill, can you forgive my want of gallantry, if I transfer you to the charge of my nephew? Will you allow him to show you the transparency?"

Mr. Courtenaye stepped forward, eagerly; and, before she had time to think, Ethel found herself arm-in-arm, and walking on quietly with her former lover.

CHAPTER LXXXV.

A SCENE BY MOONLIGHT.

Thou canst not restore me
The depth and the truth
Of the love that came o'er me
In earliest youth.

Their gloss is departed.
Their magic is down;
And sad, and faint-hearted,
I wander alone.

ETHEL and Mr. Courtenaye both walked on in silence, both careless of what direction they took, and solitary, even in that glittering crowd, each alive only to the other's presence. At length each stopped, as if moved by a sudden and mutual feeling; perhaps Ethel, unconsciously, obeyed the movement of Norbourne, to whom the quick, silent walk, had become intolerable. On his part, there might, also, have been a little intention; for nothing could be more lonely than the nook where they paused. On one side was a thicket of gum cistus, then in the height of its fragile bloom; a shower of white leaves lay on the turf below, one-half had fallen since morning; a willow drooped over the marble balustrade, the long green branches dipping into the stream, and breaking, with their tremulous shadow, the silvery column that the moonlight traced on the water.

Ethel leaned on the balustrade, and gazed down on the river, chiefly to have an excuse for withdrawing her arm from Norbourne's, for she saw nothing of the scene before her. She started, as if from a fiend, at the sense of

enjoyment which stole over her at his side; it recalled all her former happiness, but it also recalled how bitterly it had been purchased. The moonlight fell full on her face; and the delicate profile was outlined on the dark clear air like a statue's,—as colourless,—and, Norbourn felt, as cold. For a few minutes he stood, struck less with her perfect beauty, than with the change that had passed over it during the last year. The mouth no longer trembled with sweet half smiles, born of no cause but the very buoyancy of inward gladness; no blushes came, fast thronging to the cheek; blushes without a cause, save delicious consciousness. True, the eyes were downcast, as of old, but they strove not to look up, and when scarce raised, sinking again with sudden shame; now, they were only fixed on the objects below.

Norbourn felt, keenly felt, how much their relative position was altered; even now he could not explain his seeming inconstancy. Could she forgive him? An age of anxious thought passed in those few moments; but there was something that encouraged him in the soothing influences of the calm and lovely hour; despair seemed impossible; and time, so precious, was passing rapidly: the suspense grew intolerable.

"Miss Churchill!" exclaimed he: "dearest Ethel!"

She turned, startled by his sudden address, and the deep flush encouraged him to go on.

"Dearest—sweetest!" continued he, passionately, "tell me that we may yet be happy; that the devotion of my whole life will atone."

"Mr. Courtenaye," returned Ethel, endeavouring to move away, "you will pardon me if I decline listening to protestations, of whose value I am now fully aware!"

"Listen, my more than beloved, my idolized Ethel!" exclaimed he, snatching her hands, and detaining her; "do not rashly throw from you a heart so utterly your own: my only hope of happiness in this world depends upon you: you know not how I love you!"

"This is not the first time that I have heard a similar assertion from Mr. Courtenaye," replied Ethel, with whom indignation was rapidly mastering every other feeling. It was impossible for her to listen to words of love from Norbourn, and not recollect how undoubting had been her early confidence, and how cruelly it had been betrayed.

"Dearest, sweetest Ethel!" cried he, "forgive me; you know not the circumstances in which I was placed!"

To Ethel, this speech bore only one interpretation; she thought it referred to what Lady Marchmont had suggested,—to pecuniary embarrassments: for these she was too young, too ignorant of their effect in the world, to have the slightest sympathy: however, she mastered the bitter anger that gave her momentary and forced composure, while she said,—

"Perhaps I may be permitted to ask what those circumstances were?"

"Impossible!" cried Courtenaye: "dearest Ethel, let me owe my forgiveness only to the kind and gentle heart which once I hoped was mine!"

This appeal to the past was most unfortunate for his cause; his allusion to her feelings seemed to Ethel a positive insult.

"Mr. Courtenaye," said she, coldly and haughtily, "might have spared any mention of affection so ill bestowed—of confidence so misplaced. He will allow me to tell him, that whatever my former weakness may have been, not a trace remains of it now!"

"Ethel! my own, my only love!" exclaimed he, in a broken voice, "do not leave me thus; tell me that time may yet soften your too just indignation; give me hope."

"Never!" said she: "nay, Mr. Courtenaye, I insist upon hearing no more: I only marvel at your dreaming I could ever believe you again!"

Even while she spoke, she turned away so rapidly, that she was gone before Norbourn recovered the shock of her last words. He felt that his case was hopeless, and he could not blame her; but the spot was hateful to him; he hurried from the shade, and met his uncle. Lord Norbourn had just seen Miss Churchill alone; and, under the excuse of having missed her own party, join that of Lady Mary Wortley's, just then passing.

"Ah!" said Lady Mary, "I thought that Lady Marchmont was too well amused to take care of you; so, come, and I will help you to find her; or, rather, let us look for Sir George Kingston!"

Lord Norbourn had watched them pass, and now he met his nephew, pale and agitated. He asked no questions, but drew his nephew's arm within his own; and, complaining of fatigue, proposed going home.

CHAPTER LXXXVI.

A LATE BREAKFAST.

Why did I love him? I look'd up to him
With earnest admiration, and sweet faith.
I could forgive the miserable hours
His falsehood, and his only, taught, my heart;
But I cannot forgive that for his sake.
My faith in good is shaken, and my hopes
Are pale and cold, for they have look'd on death.
Why should I love him? he no longer is
That which I loved.

SIR GEORGE KINGSTON had just wrapped her cloak round the graceful figure of Lady Marchmont, and was going to hand her into the carriage, when her attention was asked for a moment by Lord Norbourn. Drawing her within the shadow of a column, he said, in an earnest whisper,—

"Dearest Lady Marchmont, something has gone wrong between Norbourn and Miss Churchill: I suspect that, from most mistaken pique, she has refused him; may I rely on your influence to set it right?"

"You may, at all events," replied she, "rely on my utmost endeavours."

not fail!" said he: "do justify
tell her how wrong I was to
surrender to the utmost, as I frankly
but I must not now detain you.
I leave our cause in your

he resigned her to Sir George
e, who said, as he placed her in
-
h I shall need a new calendar;
lay of the year is, I have just
uly!"

mont found her companions in no
urse. Her husband was asleep,
anguid voice was scarcely audif-
forced a reply to some trifling
Henrietta could perceive, from
movement, and from the short
s, that she was weeping. When
home, the light showed Ethel
rout, that she thought all at-
tercession were best deferred to
It must, also, be confessed, that
eary for much eloquence as a

sunshine of noon, as it fell
the windows of Lady March-
g-closet the following morning,
retty a piece of artificial life, as
e furnished painter with an in-
stic figures, and bright birds and
paper, recalled nothing that had
before—the fantastic reigned
so it did in the china scattered
d. I never could enter into the
ina; it is an affection born of
those stiff shepherdesses; those
ots; those monsters, which take
ut a graceful one; those little,
ke no appeal to my imagination;
othing but ideas of trade; they
the auction-room. Moreover,
ns; the bargain can only be one,
the first purchaser is dead, or
as left either heirs or creditors,
reedy, careless, and impatient;
s be disposed of during a life-
e only tells a common tale of,
nce, then want; fancies indulged
to end miserably. A bargain
; one man's loss, tempting an-
pidity. But, "it were too cu-
ne thus," is the motto of daily
, in the meantime, the sunshine
over a careless world.

st wind waved the curtains to
; in golden glimpses, now shed-
re over the frosted silver, and
s, of the mirror; then, by the
ow, giving what seemed almost
e quaint figures on the Indian
dling, with clearer colour, the
re crowding the flower-stands.
the roses, mingled with the fra-
which stood just made on the
-table.

each in a large fauteuil, wrap-
white dressing-gowns, the hair
with a single riband, sat the two

friends. The excitement of yesterday's tri-
umphs had not yet left Lady Marchmont's lip
and eye. She was in the gayest spirits; a
mood, the inevitable augury of ill; it is like
the very bright sunshine which is sure to pre-
cede rain. "When the pavement dries so
quickly, we may be sure of another shower,"
is a common saying, and it may serve as a
type. Alas! this careless gayety seems like
tempting fate.

Ethel was the very reverse: the mouth was
pale, the eyes were heavy; during the preced-
ing night they had closed with the weight of
tears, but not with sleep; she looked what she
felt, very wretched. The habit of endurance,
almost mistaken for composure, had been
broken in upon: she had been forced to re-
member her past happiness; again to shrink
from the future. It was as if the gates of life
had been twice closed upon her; not that, for
a moment, she regretted her refusal; never
again could Norbourne Courtenaye be what
he had been to her; but never could she feel
for another what she had felt for him; so
young, and yet with all the sweetest hopes of
life a blank: she hoped, she feared, she
wished for nothing. It was in vain that she
made an effort to talk; her companion's gay-
ety only oppressed her. Henrietta saw that
any attempt to lead the conversation to the
point she wished, would be in vain; she was,
therefore, obliged to do what, to a woman, is
especially disagreeable, to begin upon her
subject at once. She hesitated; for her own
heart told her, that where the lover fails, no
third party ever succeeds.

"My dear Ethel," said she, "tell me the
truth; what did Mr. Courtenaye say to you
last night? Moonlight and sentiment always
go together."

"Don't be witty now," exclaimed Ethel,
"I cannot bear it; be serious, and I will not
have a reserve from a friend so kind and so
true as yourself. Mr. Courtenaye renewed
his offer last night —"

"And you accepted him!" replied Henri-
etta, purposely.

"Accepted him!" returned Ethel: "ne-
ver!"

CHAPTER LXXXVII.

CONVERSATION AFTER BREAKFAST.

False look, false hope, and falsest love,
All meteors sent to me,
To show how they the heart could move,
And how deceiving be:
They left me darken'd, crush'd, alone,
My spirit's household gods o'erthrown.

The world itself is changed, and all
That was beloved before
Is vanish'd, and beyond recall,
For I can hope no more:
The scar of fire, the dint of steel,
Are easier than such wounds to heal.

"ETHEL," said Lady Marchmont, earnestly,
"you are wrong: I will not talk to you, be-
cause I know it would be in vain, of the ad-
vantages of the connexion; for I believe too

late, that nothing in marriage can supply the want of affection: but, Ethel, you love him!"

"I did!" replied the other, coldly.

"Nay, you do!" continued the countess. "Forgive me, dearest, if I seem to say more than even our old friendship would warrant; but do let me implore you, not from any mistaken pride—nay," seeing Ethel about to speak, "I will not be interrupted—do not, from mistaken pride, throw your happiness away from you. Think what it is to go through life loving, and beloved; to be understood, appreciated, cared for; the thousand slight things of daily life made delicious by a quiet, yet well understood sympathy; your thoughts shared, your sorrows soothed; a motive for every action, for you know that their object is the happiness of another."

"Mr. Courtenaye has already showed how much he cared for that happiness," returned Ethel, bitterly.

"Yet you love him!" said Henrietta. "True, his name passes your lips; if you thought that you were to meet him anywhere, you would not go; yet, not the less is his image perpetually before you. We drive out together: half the time you do not hear a word that I say; lost in your own thoughts—thoughts which, many slight things betray, are fixed on one object. If you rouse from your reverie, you are restless and agitated; your eye wanders round in one perpetual search; and if, perchance, as has happened once or twice, he has only passed in the distance, your eye brightens, your cheek flushes crimson, and your whole frame quivers with uncontrollable emotion!"

"I did not think," whispered Ethel, "that I could have shown such weakness: you know not how I have struggled with—how I despise it!"

"Nay," replied Henrietta, "why should you struggle with a feeling which, in you, is both natural and excusable? Come, be generous, and forgive Mr. Courtenaye; it is of no use expecting romantic constancy in the present day. You do not know, and, therefore, can make no allowance for embarrassments of a pecuniary nature; but involved estates are very troublesome things."

"O, Henrietta!" exclaimed her listener, "what must that love be which worldly circumstances could, in a moment, suffice to change? Ah, what is there in the wide world that I could not have endured for his sake?"

"Well, then," interrupted Lady Marchmont, "endure a little wrong on his part: I have no doubt his uncle exercised great influence over him. Now, Lord Norbourne, who, I can tell you, is one of your greatest admirers, consents, and there is not an obstacle to your happiness."

"Yes," said Ethel, "there is one not to be got over—the past! Henrietta, I could for-

give the misery that I have suffered, though even you know not what it has been. My God, forgive me murmurs wrung from me by wretchedness too great to be endured! Night after night, I have laid my head on the pillow, and prayed that I might never raise it again; day after day, I have turned away loathing from the morning light! How could I bear to think on the many miserable hours before me! With what heart-sickness I waited for the letter that never came! I have felt my temper grown irritable, my spirits broken, all my former enjoyments grown distasteful, my very nature changed—all this I could forgive, but I cannot forgive his own unworthiness! He whom I thought so high-minded, so generous; to whom I looked up, and on whom I relied with such fearless confidence; for him to prove so cruel, so false! In what can I ever believe again? It is not for his loss that I grieve, but I grieve over my own wasted affections; for all, that I cannot again even dream! No; let Mr. Courtenaye restore me my belief in his own high excellence, let him give me back my hope, my confidence, and then let him ask me to love him once more,—but not till then!"

She bowed her face in her hands, and the large tears trickled slowly through.

"Yet," said Lady Marchmont, seating herself by Ethel, "this very grief shows you regret him."

"It does!" exclaimed Ethel, suddenly raising her face, and dashing the tears aside. "I loved him—utterly, tenderly, as I shall never love again; but I will not trust my happiness a second time with one who wrecked it entirely: I have not courage to risk such suffering again. He sacrificed me first for interest; I should next be flung aside for some newer fancy. There is no faith to be placed, where faith has been once broken: and now, let this subject be dropped forever between us. I will not, I could not, marry Mr. Courtenaye!"

"It is of no use," exclaimed Lady Marchmont, as her companion left the room, "and I know not what to say. She convinces my reason, and yet I see she is wretched; she will neither be happy with him, nor without him. Love is a fearful risk; and, I believe, of all the ingenious inventions for multiplying and varying misery, it is one of the most ingenious."

"One word more," said Ethel, returning for a moment: "I must entreat, as a personal favour, that this subject be never renewed between us. It can only serve to keep alive feelings that I owe it to myself to subdue. Henceforth I shall consider forgetfulness a duty."

Poor Ethel! of all duties, forgetfulness is the hardest to fulfil. The very effort to forget teaches us to remember

CHAPTER LXXXVIII.

LADY MARCHMONT'S JOURNAL.

ng to think, if we could fling aside
 ik and mantle many wear from pride,
 ch would be, we now so little gues,
 each heart's undream'd, unsought recess!

less smile, like a bright banner borne;
 ghlike merriment; the lip of scorn;
 i cheek, what is there that can be
 sit to pierce as gayety?

king to be scann'd the gloomy brow
 hide something it would not avow;
 king words, light laugh, and ready jest,
 e the bars, the curtains to the breast.

habits, that of writing down your
 and feelings, is one of the most diffi-
 andon. Henrietta soon found a ter-
 um left, by the letters in which she
 our forth every feeling and thought
 le. Often of an evening, when she
 ie too feverishly restless for sleep,
 o indolent for defined occupation, a
 been a resource; now she took to
 journal. Sometimes it was burnt
 ay, sometimes kept; but the habit
 elf, and her journal soon grew into
 friend. A few extracts will show

FROM LADY MARCHMONT'S JOURNAL.

an odd thing it is, the trouble one
 collect and to amuse people who are
 used, and who do not thank us if

What do I recollect of the even-
 tle, but that I was rather more bored
 l. I should so like to have talked
 ir George Kingston. I cannot un-
 row it is that I, who have lived all
 long strangers, should ever feel shy;
 very often do. He had singularly
 ng manners, and talked easily. I
 a thousand answers I might have
 that it is too late. It was positive-
 talk to another, as I did, while I
 ith him; but I could not help it.
 ot help it"—is not that the reason
 nine out of ten of our actions? He
 no one but myself: I wish he had
 some one else. I should like to
 he talked about. The other men
 te him: they called him a coxcomb.
 y in dress is never popular with
 sex; if possible, you will be called
 that be quite out of the question,
 ie resource of calling you affected.
 nks him handsome, but she is so
 with her own thoughts that she has
 attention for any thing else.

being in love appears a pleasant
 existence; it is always agreeable to
 there is another thinking of you,
 ou think of them or not. I like the
 here being one individual leaving
 who will bear away every look you
 n, every word you have said,—it
 ortance to them in your own eyes;
 have often marvelled what people
 ch other. Even as a book is read

through, people are talked through. One
 needs change of acquaintance; it is to the
 mind what change of air is to the body. As
 Hortense says of the gilded knicknackery of
 her saloon,—

"Est-ce utile?
 C'est plus, c'est nécessaire."

I have never yet been able to steer my lovers
 through the Scylla of presence, or the Charyb-
 dis of absence. If I see much of them I get
 tired; if I do not see them, I utterly forget
 them. I hear a great deal of the necessity of
 loving: I better understand the difficulty of
 doing it. I wonder whether Sir George
 Kingston has ever been in love? Does any
 body ever go through life without feeling it?
 yet the generality of what are called love af-
 fairs appear to be the most insipid things in
 the world. They put me in mind of the
 French-woman, who, at a masquerade, was
 tormented by a full grown Cupid exclaiming,

"Mais regardez-moi, je suis l'amour."

"Yes," cried the lady, "*l'amour propre*."

After all, a story I have heard my grandmo-
 ther tell of the last but half-a-dozen Lord and
 Lady Pomfret's courtship, is not so far re-
 moved from the ordinary course either.

"Do you love buttered toast?" was the
 gentleman's question.

"Yes I do," was the lady's reply.

"Buttered on both sides?"

"O, dear, Yes!"

"Well, then, we will be married."

"How very nice! Yes!"

Now half what are called love affairs have
 no higher ground of sympathy than the poor
 mutual liking for buttered toast.

There are some people who ought never to
 dream of commonplacing the ideal with them-
 selves. The world of the-heart is essentially
 ideal: it collects all poetry,—innate and ac-
 quired; it is fastidious, dreaming, and deli-
 cate; and is a question of taste as well as of
 feeling; and it is to this world that love be-
 longs. It should be kept as far apart from
 lower life as that mysterious world of stars
 and clouds on which I am now gazing. I do
 like this last hour of the four and twenty that
 we snatch from sleep. It is so pleasant to
 feel the excitement of an amusing evening
 fade away, by degrees, into a mood half
 thoughtful, half pensive, like the rich colours
 in the west, melting into the saddened soft-
 ness of twilight.

What made me say I was bored to-night?—
 it is an affectation of to-day. It is worse than
 a sin to be pleased: it is a shame. What has
 poor, dear Truth done now-a-days, that every
 body blushes to own her? I ought to be sa-
 tisfied with the last few hours, if it were only
 for making me enjoy the stillness; and there
 is nothing like the stillness of London—it is
 intense. The very wind has not a voice, and
 what a depth of purple is in the sky, broken
 by a few small, bright stars! It was a beau-
 tiful belief that sought to read the future in
 their light. We read nothing there now. My
 spirit denies my words; they yet shine down

upon us with influence; they give us dreams, fantasies, and associations: we feel the divinity of our better nature in their presence. If I ever loved, I would almost wish to be forgotten during the hurry of business and the cares of day; but let the beloved think of me in the soft and dark silence of a starry midnight: if he have one spiritual or tender thought in his nature, it will be all love's and mine. Mine! ah, ought I to wish it mine? But I hate the word "ought"—it always implies something dull, cold and commonplace. The "ought not's" of life are its pleasantest things.

Alas! for Lady Marchmont, when principle became master of persiflage, and the heart turned away from its own truth.

CHAPTER LXXXIX.

A DECLARATION.

I cannot choose, but marvel at the way
In which we pass our lives from day to day
Learning strange lessons in the human heart;
And yet, like shadows letting them depart.
Is misery so familiar, that we bring
Ourselves to view it as "a usual thing?"
We do too little feel each other's pain;
We do too much relax the social chain
That binds us to each other; slight the care
There is for grief, in which we have no share.

AMID the many contrasts produced by our forced unions of nature and art, there is no contrast so strange as that between the exterior and the internal world of society. It would seem as if the one existed only to give the lie to the other. The one—so dark, so deep, so difficult of access; the other—so covered with glittering falsehoods, and all seeming so smooth and so easy. Only an occasional sarcasm reveals the unquiet of the subdued, but feverish heart. Nothing could be gayer in appearance than the little circle assembled at Lady Harvey's villa. It was a very warm evening; and the moonlight turned the Thames to an unbroken mirror of silver, and gave to the soft shadows of the shrubs, and the creepers that wound among the trellises, an appearance almost Italian. Watteau might have painted the group on the lawn; and, assuredly, Lady Marchmont, Lady Mary Wortley, and Miss Churchill, were each exquisite specimens of different styles of beauty.

"I am not sure," exclaimed Lady Mary, "that I like moonlight; it makes one look so pale."

"Well, if it does," returned Sir George Kingston, glancing at Lady Marchmont, whose regular features seemed outlined on the air like those of a statue,—

"*'Paleur qui marque une ame tendre
A bien son prix.'*"

Lady Mary observed the look, and it put her in what is best expressed by an ill-humour. Her liking for Henrietta had long since passed away; jealousy had, as usual, been followed by envy, whose companion is sure to be dis-

like. She had not yet forgiven her for Lord Harvey; and now there was Sir George Kingston, whose homage she had quite resolved on making her own.

"*'Une ame tendre,'*" said she; which, being translated into plain English, means 'a tender heart.' "Why, instead of coming from Paris, I shall believe you come from Utopia. There are no hearts in our world."

"For 'ours,' say 'yours,'" replied Sir George.

"No; I mean what I say," interrupted Lady Mary.

"An unusual concurrence," muttered Lord Harvey.

Without attending to the remark, Lady Mary went on.

"We might have had hearts in our cradles; but, as I don't pretend to remember mine, I cannot say. Perhaps at sixteen, too, there is a sort of imagination of one; but it is a phantom which flits at the cockcrow of reality. We soon learn,

*'That the worth of any thing
Is just as much as it will bring.'*

and we value a lover by the estimate of others, not by our own. Our own suffrage is nothing."

"This is making love a mere question of vanity," said Henrietta.

"A question, my dear, I should have thought you could have answered as well as any one," returned Lady Mary. "Love is society's Alexander the Great, only intent on making conquests; and we care for no captives but those who follow the track of our triumphs in chains."

"I utterly disagree with you," exclaimed Henrietta; "I have always thought mystery the very atmosphere of love!"

"O! you would like a cavalier, with the dramatic accompaniments of moonlight and mask. Well, the two first are quite ready; and," added she, with her peculiar sneer, "I dare say Lady Harvey could furnish a mask."

"I think," retorted her ladyship, who cared little what she said, "a muzzle seems more necessary."

"But to resume a subject," said Sir George, "which, whether it be felt or not, is universally interesting. Why, if there be no such thing as love, do we all affect to believe in it?"

"Pray," replied Lady Mary, "don't ask me to account for human inconsistency. Why do people, who would never look at a picture by themselves, pretend to a taste for art?"

"But," interrupted Lady Marchmont, "because some affect a taste, that is no reason that there should not be many who really have it. I, for one, believe both in love, and the love of art."

"Charming credulity!" exclaimed the other;

"Catch, ere she change, the Cynthia of the minute!" but we all know that you are

'Every thing by fits, and nothing long.'"

"It is quite curious to observe," said Lady Larvey, "how accurately you remember all 'ope's lines. I do believe that he was your *rando passion*; and that you only gave him p for the sake of appearances, which, I admit were not in his favour."

This was a disagreeable subject—one woman always knows how to plague another; but it had the desired effect: the conversation unguished, and the party began to disperse about the garden.

"How very lovely the river is just now, with its dark ripples growing so silvery wherever the moonlight touches them!" exclaimed Lady Marchmont.

"Lovely, indeed!" said her companion: but she saw that her companion's gaze was fixed upon herself. "Perhaps, from having always stayed so quietly in England," said she, at last, to break a silence, growing every moment more embarrassing—"I may exaggerate its delight; but I have the greatest wish to see foreign countries. Did you enjoy travelling much?"

"I never," whispered Sir George, "knew that enjoyment was till this moment."

"A very pretty piece of flattery," replied Henrietta, trying to laugh it off; "but not true."

"You feel it to be true," replied he: "I cannot talk to you as I do to other women."

Ah, how subtle is the flattery which at once separates you from the rest of your sex!

"Do you know," continued he, "I sometimes think I fear you?"

"Fear me!" exclaimed Lady Marchmont.

"Yes," returned he, in a low, earnest tone: "or, rather, I should fear you, did I not see how different you are to the gay, the careless idlers around you. Do you think that I could talk to Lady Mary as I talk to you?—she could not understand me."

"Yet, how clever she is!" replied Lady Marchmont.

"And so are you," continued her companion; "but you have, what she has not, a heart—a heart full of all high and kindly realities."

"O, pray, go on! it is," said she, smiling, "so pleasant to hear one's own praises."

"Ah!" exclaimed Sir George, "do not, even for one moment, imitate her, in laughing at all that is serious and true."

It was not pleasant to be supposed imitating Lady Mary, so Henrietta was silent; and her companion continued:—

"I said that I feared you—ah, beautiful, beloved, as you are!—and you know it!" exclaimed he, passionately, interrupting the words he saw trembling on her lip. "It is no right thing to know that all control over my own happiness is gone from me forever; that my very life depends upon your will."

And what did Henrietta say? Nothing; it she listened.

They were soon rejoined by the society; and Lady Marchmont strove to still the reproach, which would make itself heard, by

forcing the gayest spirits: affection became suddenly matter of the lightest raillery.

It is said that ridicule is the test of truth: it is never applied, but when we wish to deceive ourselves; when, if we cannot exclude the light, we are fain to draw a curtain before it. The sneer springs out of the wish to deny; and wretched must be the state of that mind which desires to take refuge in doubt! But the instinct of right and wrong is immutable; all other voices may be silenced, but not that in ourselves.

CHAPTER XO.

THE AUTHOR AND THE ACTRESS.

I cannot count the changes of my heart,
So often has it turn'd away from things
Once idols of its being. They depart—
Hopes, fancies, joys, illusions, as if wings
Sprang suddenly from all old ties, to start;
Or, if they linger longer, life but brings
Weariness, hollowness, canker, soil, and stain,
Till the heart saith of pleasure, it is pain.

"How beautiful she looked! but how pale!" exclaimed Walter Maynard, who had seen Miss Churchill, the night before at the theatre; "and she is not married yet! Is it possible that she can know what it is to have the heart feed upon itself?—to dream, but not to hope? Has she found out the bitter mockery of this weary life, whose craving for happiness is only given that it may end in disappointment? But what is this to me? I must be gay—be witty: the points are not yet thrown into the dialogue in the second act. I wish I could remember some of the things I said last night; but, alas! the epigrams uttered over champagne are like the wreaths the Egyptians flung on the Nile, they float away, the gods alone know whither. Nevertheless, I must be very brilliant this morning—brilliant! with this pain in my head, and this weight at my heart," and he drew a sheet of paper towards him.

At first, he wrote slowly and languidly; but what had been a passion was now a power, and he soon obtained mastery over his subject. The light flashed in his eyes, the crimson deepened in his cheek; and, tearing the first page, he now began to write rapidly and earnestly. Strange the contrast between the writer's actual situation, and that which he creates! I have been writing all my life, and even now I do not understand the faculty of composition; but this I do know, that the history of the circumstances under which most books are written would be a frightful picture of human suffering. How often is the pen taken up when the hand is unsteady with recent sickness, and bodily pain is struggled against, and sometimes in vain! How often is the page written hurriedly and anxiously,—the mind fevered the while by the consciousness that it is not doing justice to its powers! and yet a certain quantity of work must be completed, to meet the exigencies of that

poverty which has no other resource. But there is an evil beyond all this. When the iron of some settled sorrow has entered into the soul,—when some actual image is predominant even in the world of imagination, and the thoughts, do what you will, run in one only channel,—composition is then a perpetual struggle, broken by the one recurring cry, “Hast thou found me, O! mine enemy?” Something or other is forever bringing up the one idea: it colours every day more and more the creations which were conjured up in the vain hope to escape from it.

“I cannot write to-day,” becomes more and more the frequent exclamation. It is, I believe, one of those shadows which deepen on the mind as it approaches to its close. It is a new and a dreadful sensation to the poet when he first finds, that “his spirits do not come when he does call to them;” or that they will only come in one which makes him cry, “take any shape but that.” It is a new sensation to be glad of any little return of power, and a most painful one.

Walter now rejoiced whenever he did a morning's work. Alas! the real was struggling with the ideal. After writing a few pages, he suddenly paused; and, pushing the papers aside, exclaimed, “What a mockery this is! I do not know myself what I write for. Money!—why should I make more than will hold this miserable alliance firm—just keep body and soul together? and sometimes I ask, is it worth even doing that? Fame!—alas! what would I now give to hope, to believe in it, as I used to do! but it is far off and cold; it lies beyond the grave. And love—it is a bitter thing to love in vain!—to feel that none will ever know the deep tenderness, the desire for sympathy, the sweet wealth of thought that is garnered in your heart. How passionately I wish to be beloved again! to pour out my whole soul, were it but for a day, and then die!”

The emotion exhausted him; for Walter had tried a frame, naturally delicate, too severely. The vigil and the revel, the hour of social excitement and that of solitary suffering, were alike doing their work. Bodily weakness mastered for a time the mind. The tears filled his eyes, and he closed them; a few moments more, and he was asleep. He had slept for about half an hour when there came a low rap at the door; this did not disturb him: and the applicant, who had a key that fitted the lock, opened, and came in without further ceremony. It was Lavinia Fenton, gayly but richly dressed; the world had gone well with her. She took off her mask and laid it on the table, together with a small basket; and, looking around, saw Walter asleep on the sofa. She bent over him for a few minutes with an expression of anxiety and tenderness, which, for the time, quite subdued the expression of her bold, though fine features. Sleep showed the change that a few months had wrought. The soft brown hair was damp, and the dew stood on the

white forehead, where the blue veins were azure as a woman's. You saw the pulses beat in the clear temples, and the chest heaved with the quick throbbing of the heart. The cheek was flushed with rich unnatural crimson; but both around the mouth and eyes hung a faint dark shadow, the surest herald of disease. The hand, too, how white and emaciated it was! yet with a feverish pink inside.

The girl leaned over him—vain, coquetish, selfish; the degradation inevitable from her position lowering even more a nature not originally of fine material; yet one spot in her heart was generous, and even pure. She loved him. Had she been beloved again, her whole being would have changed; for his sake she would have done any thing, and could have become any thing. Lavinia was clever; a coarse, shrewd kind of cleverness, quick to perceive its own interest, and unscrupulous in pursuing it. She had no delicacy, no keen feelings that got in her way. She had made great progress on the stage, was a favourite with the public, and, if not happy, was, at all events, often very well amused. Still her heart clung to Walter: she knew that he loved another, that the connexion between themselves was rather endured than solicited on his part; still she had for him a careful and disinterested tenderness, that half redeemed her faults—at least, it showed that all of good and feminine kindness was not quite extinct within her. She leaned over him, while her eyes filled with tears.

“He is dying,” muttered she, in a low whisper; “he has too little of this world in him to last long in it,” and she buried her face in her hands.

But it was no part of Lavinia's system to fret long over any thing: she was too selfish, perhaps we should say, too thoughtless, for prolonged sorrow. Life appeared to her too short to be wasted in unavailing regret. It is the creed of many beside our young actress. She rose softly from her knee, flung back the hair that had fallen over her face, dashed the tears, and muttered, “It is that he has not been in bed all night.” She then began to make preparations for breakfast, took the fruit and cream from her basket; and it was the fragrant smoke of the coffee that roused Walter from his sleep.

It was curious to note the difference between the two whom circumstances had so thrown together; those circumstances, all that was in common to them. Lavinia—shrewd, careless, clever; ready to meet any difficulty, however humiliating, that might occur; utterly without principle; confident in that good fortune, which she scrupled at no means of attaining—was the very type of the real. Walter was the ideal—generous, high-minded, clear in perception; but sensitive, even weak, in action; or, rather, too apt to imagine a world full of lofty aims and noble impulses, and then fancying that was the world in which he had to live.

CHAPTER XCI.

DIFFERENT VIEWS OF LIFE.

And thus it is with all that made life fair,
Gone with the freshness that it used to wear
'Tis sad to mark the ravage that the heart
Makes of itself! how one by one depart
The colours that made hope. We seek, we find;
And find, too, charm has, with the change, declined.
Many things have I loved, that now to me
Are as a marvel how they loved could be;
Yet, on we go, desiring to the last
Illusions vain as any in the past.

"So, all my improvement in your heroine was thrown away upon you. I thought how it would be when I saw Miss Churchill in the stage-box."

It was long since Walter had heard her name, and the sound jarred upon his ear; it brought the real too harshly amid the delusions with which he delighted to surround her image.

"Well," continued Lavinia, "life is just like a comedy, only it does not end so pleasantly; but it has just as many cross purposes. Here I am in love with you, who care only for Miss Churchill; she, again, loves Mr. Courtenay, and he loves only himself, as far as I can make out."

"Do choose some pleasanter subject," exclaimed Maynard.

"O, then I must talk of myself: I cannot think of a pleasanter one," said she. "Do you know that I have made a brilliant conquest?—one that half the fine ladies in London are dying for."

"I congratulate you," replied her companion.

At that moment a slow, heavy step was heard on the stairs. Walter caught the sound before his companion heard it.

"For Heaven's sake!" whispered he, "be silent. There is that eternal dun again. I shall pay him next week, when that cursed pamphlet is done. But the door is closed, so are the windows; if he hears nothing, he will think I am not at home."

The actress put her finger upon her lip; and so susceptible is an imaginative temperament of an outward impression, that, for a moment, Walter forgot every thing but how well the pretty attitude and the arch look would have told on the stage. But a loud single knock at the door recalled him to the full humiliation of his position. The colour rushed to his face, and then left him deadly pale, while he held his breath lest it should betray him. The young actress was at first inclined to laugh; but there was a wretchedness in the expression of Maynard's countenance which subdued even her reckless gaiety; knock after knock sounded heavily upon the door, still heavier did they sink on his spirit who sat crouching and miserable within. A probation of long and shameful years must be gone through; each one with the endurance more bitter, suffering yet more intolerable, before the debtor can arrive at that system of reckless evasion which is the last stage of poverty. Hope and honesty must long have

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been left behind, one finer feeling must have been crushed after another, and hunger been predominant, before debt can be held as other than the most intolerable shame, the most oppressive misery. Walter was yet young in his career, and he felt it bitterly.

"At length, the creditor, tired of knocking to no purpose, and convinced that Maynard was not within, thrust a letter under the door, and his steps were heard slowly descending the oaken staircase. Walter could not breathe even when the echo of the last died into utter silence. He dreaded lest he should return. Lavinia sprang up; even her light feet jarred upon his ear: it seemed as if the least movement must recall the man again.

"Hush!" exclaimed he, in a broken voice.

"Nonsense!" replied the girl; "he won't come again to-day. Why, it is not much," added she, opening the bill: "I will pay it for you."

"Give it me!" exclaimed Walter, angrily, colouring even a deeper red. "I wish you would not open my letters."

"I am so rich to-day," said she, laughing; "and what makes me in a good humour, puts you in a bad one. Come, come, be a good child; leave the affair in my hands, and you shall be plagued no more about the matter."

"Lavinia," replied he, taking the bill from her, "there are obligations which it is an affront to offer."

He was right in his refusal. Sooner or later a woman must inevitably despise the man who takes money from her. Before a man can do this, there must be those radical defects of character to which even kindness cannot always be blind. He must be a moral coward, because he exposes her to those annoyances which he has not courage enough to face himself; he must be mean, because he submits to an obligation from the inferior and the weak; and he must be ungrateful, because ingratitude is the necessary consequence of receiving favours of which we are ashamed. Money is the great breaker-up of love and friendship; and this is, I believe, the reason of the common saying, that "large families get on best in the world," because they can receive from each other assistance without degradation. The affection of family ties has the character on it of childhood in which it was formed; it is free, open, confiding; it has none of the delicacy of friendship, or the romance of sentiment: you know that success ought to be in common, and that you have but one interest.

"You must not look angry," said Walter, whose heart smote him for his petulant refusal. "My difficulties only need a week's hard work; but, I do not know how it is, I am not so industrious as I used to be. A little thing takes off my attention, and I am feverish and restless."

"It is," replied the other, "that you work too much."

"No," returned he, "it is that I do not work enough; that I allow my mind to be fretted and distracted with other things."

am never so well, or in such good spirits, as when I shut myself up, and do nothing but write. I wish I could always keep inventing instead of thinking. But we have forgotten your brilliant conquest. What is the name of your new *admirer*?"

"Who should it be," replied the actress, with an air of triumph, "but the handsomest and the most fashionable man in London—Sir George Kingston?"

"Sir George Kingston!" cried Walter; "why you say, truly enough, that he has turned the prettiest heads in London! I cannot understand the luck that attends on some, from the very cradle. There are men, who seem only sent into the world to show how much fortune can do for a favourite! And so you are to be

'Orsini's mistress, and his fancy's queen!'"

"You need not look so surprised," exclaimed Lavinia, with a slight air of pique.

"It was at Sir George Kingston's good fortune, then," interrupted Maynard: "I congratulate you on having taken possession of a heart that so many are trying for!"

"I am sure," cried the young actress, "I never said anything about a heart; I very much doubt whether a man like Sir George Kingston has one. He is excessively vain; and, having lived all his life in society, to society he looks for the gratification of his vanity. He has one object in existence—to be talked about; for this he devotes himself to the reigning beauty; for this he rides the finest horses, and gives the best dinners; for this he has furnished his house in Spring Gardens in the most splendid manner; and for this he will take me to be the prettiest piece of furniture, there!"

"I have heard he is very clever," said Walter.

"He is no such thing," replied Lavinia; "but he desires to be thought so. I believe, what first made him talk to me was, that he might say my good things somewhere else. As for liking me, he cares no more for me than I do for these currants!" scattering a bunch over her plate as she spoke; "and yet you will see what influence I shall exercise over him. A man who leads his sort of life, must be subject to *ennui*; he will require to be amused, and I am amusing; it is my business. Moreover, he is vain, and I shall flatter him—the more coarsely the better."

"I begin to believe," muttered her companion, "that what is called delicate flattery, is an absurdity."

"You should lay it on," resumed she, "as we do paint on the stage; it is quantity that tells. But I have, also, another hold on Sir George; I shall do all sorts of absurd and outrageous things, and they will gratify his darling propensity—they will make him talked of!"

"Lavinia!" exclaimed Maynard, suddenly and earnestly, "have you a grain of feeling?"

"It is well for you, Walter, to ask that,"

answered the girl, her whole face changing, and her words half choked by strong emotion.

"I was wrong," cried he; "to me you have always been kind and enduring; but forgive me, I am not well, and am grown sadly irritable."

"For one word, one look of yours," continued she, "you know well I would give up every thing else in the world. O! that you would let me stay beside you, to watch you, to nurse you: but this is folly—" for her quick eye caught the coldness on her companion's face; "I know you do not love me, that you never could love me now. Well, I have chosen my own path; but O, Walter! there are times when, in the silence of the night, I sit at my window and see the stars shining down so coldly and so sadly, that my thoughts go back upon other years, and a sort of dream comes over me of a far different happiness; I see you, Walter, when but a boy, with your soft, serious eyes, sitting at the feet of my old grandmother, and reading aloud to her: I have not profited much by those words—" and the girl paused, pale and tearful; but, before Maynard had time to answer, she had started up. "but I shall be too late for rehearsal, and Sir George will be there; he intends giving the gayest suppers after the play; I shall take care that you are asked;" and, without waiting for a reply, or bidding further farewell, she left the room so suddenly, that Walter had no time to have prevented her departure, even if he had wished it.

The sound of the door, as it closed after her, sank heavily upon his heart; let her faults be what they might, she was the only human being who cared for him.

CHAPTER XCII.

LADY MARCHMONT'S JOURNAL.

Deep in the heart is an avenging power,
Conscious of right and wrong. There is no shape
Reproach can take, one-half so terrible
As when that shape is given by ourselves.
Justice hath needful punishments, and crime
Is a predestined thing to punishment.
Or soon, or late, there will be no escape
From the stern consequence of its own act.
But in ourself is Fate's worst minister:
There is no wretchedness like self-reproach.

He did not call yesterday at the usual hour. How intolerably long the morning seemed; and yet I owed it a new pleasure, it brought my first note from him. I now know his handwriting; it is graceful, almost, as a woman's. I shall not see him till to-morrow. Ah! is it true that I, and I only, shall be present to his thoughts? that life is only life when passed at my side? How intensely I feel the happiness of being loved! I am so grateful for it! Till now I have been so unappreciated, so uncared for; no one, since my dearest uncle's death, has desired to read my thoughts, or to look beyond the surface, and find what deep and passionate affections lay below.

I am the better for being beloved; I desire

to be kinder to others ; I would fain share my utter content ; a deeper pity crosses me when I see sorrow. I was growing selfish, cold, careless ; I am so no longer. I listen patiently, a sweet and ready sympathy seems to knit me closer to my kind. Life had grown so wearisome, I hoped for nothing, cared for nothing ; now, a new delight mingles with all things : a look, a word of his, makes my heart beat with tumultuous pleasure.

The other night, he came sooner to Lady Townshend's than was expected, and for my sake. I knew he was there before I saw him. How different he is to everybody else ! Perhaps this is the real mystery of love. I remember reading, long ago, an eastern story of a dervise, who had a mystic ointment, with which, when the eyes were touched, all the hidden precious things of earth were given to view. The gold and silver shone within the mountain, and the diamonds glistened within the secret mines : so it is with love, who is the fine magician, showing all the veiled treasures of the heart. How much has love taught me, that is true and beautiful ! What a mistake to build our hopes on the external vanities of life ! circumstance is nothing. How worthless, now appears to me, all that once seemed the chief objects of existence ! our happiness lies within. To love, says all that can be said of intense and engrossing delight ; even when away from him, the sunshine of his presence lingers behind. He gathered from the old garden wall a branch of those fragile roses, which, frail as they are, linger on to the last : I have kept them, and those few withered leaves have a charm I never yet found in a flower ;

" They breathe
Not of themselves, but thee !"

Strange, too, how all old enjoyments revive : things that I had thought gone by forever, I read with almost my former eagerness ; but I apply all I read to him. Ah ! no moment is languid now ; I have so much to remember ; I retrace all he said, all he did ; I imagine a thousand scenes in which we both take part.

Why is it that, in dreaming of an ideal future, I never lay the scene in London ? I fancy to myself a lone and lovely island, far away in the southern seas, where never another step entered but our own ; such an island as lives in Pope's delicious verse. How happy I could be in Calypso's cave, where

" Cedar and frankincense, an odorous pile,
Flamed on the hearth, and wide perfumed the isle.
Without the grot, a various sylvan scene
Appear'd around, and grots of living green ;
Poplars and alders ever quivering play'd,
And nodding cypress form'd a fragrant shade,
On whose high branches, waving with the storm,
The birds of broadest wing their mansions form ;
The chough, the sea-sparrow, and leucosæus crow,
And scream aloft, and skim the deep below.
Depending vines the shelving caverns screen,
And purple clusters blushing through the green ;
Four limpid fountains from the cliffs distil,
And every fountain pours a several rill
In mazy windings, wandering down the hill,
Where blooming meads with verdant greens were crown'd,
And glowing violets throw odours round."

I did not feel the full charm of these lines

when I first read them, but I do now. It is with such scenes as these—lovely, lonely, and distant—that I connect his image, not with the false and glittering passages of our daily intercourse. The feverish and tumultuous capital is only the "*place où l'on se passe le mieux du bonheur*." Will he always love me as he seems to love me now ? Why do I say *seems* ? out on such cold suspicion ! In the truth of my own heart, I read that of his ; and yet there are moments when I doubt even to despair ; when the terrible truth of my position forces itself upon the memory, which would fain shut it out forever.

What right have I to rely on the constancy of another, who am false myself ? I tremble at the future : what can I, what dare I, hope for ? O, that we had met earlier ! how happy we might have been ! Yet, what do I take from Lord Marchmont, but that which he cares not for,—my dreams, my thoughts, my feelings ? Alas, I cannot deceive myself ! I am wrong, very wrong ; I could not have written to my uncle what I have written here ! I can write no longer, it only makes me wretched !

And Henrietta turned away to be more wretched still. She felt what she did not own even to herself—the humiliation, the degradation, of her position. It is love's most dreadful penalty to fear, lest that very love lower you in the eyes of even him who inspires it ; and yet this was the inevitable result of such an attachment. But Henrietta's first step in life had been a false one : she had married a man whom she did not love ; and she had learned, too late, that in marriage nothing can supply the place of affection.

And she had a yet harder lesson to learn—that nothing can supply the place of strong, undeviating principle. There is but one wrong, and one right ; but, alas ! Henrietta was beginning to make those palliations and excuses for her own conduct, which should be reserved rigidly for questions in which we are not personally concerned. We may, we ought, to be merciful to others ; to ourselves, we should be only just.

CHAPTER XCIII.

A SECRETARYSHIP.

Alas ! and must this be the fate
That all too often will await
The gifted hand, which shall awake
The poet's lute ! and, for its sake,
All but its own sweet self resign,
Thou loved lute, to be only thine !
For what is genius, but deep feeling,
Wakening to glorious revealing ?
And what is feeling, but to be
Alive to every misery ?

" I FEAR," said Mr. Courtenaye, as he entered Walter Maynard's room, " that you must almost have forgotten me ; but I have not been well, indeed : to-morrow, I am going down to the country ; but I could not leave London without coming to see you, and I have something, I hope agreeable, to say."

Walter received his visiter with obvious pleasure. He had, for some time, been fancying that Mr. Courtenaye neglected him; he was shy, sensitive, and had of late been suffering under those tortures

"The poor alone can know,
The proud alone can feel!"

and at such a time how we exaggerate any slight! and neglect, that, by the gay and prosperous, is not even noticed, appears a grievous wrong to poverty and depression.

Norbourne just glanced round the room; but that single glance took in a whole history of privation and discomfort. The windows were dark with dust; and rain, scarce dried on the seat of one, showed that it had been inadvertently left open. The lamp, on the table, had burnt into the socket: Walter had been writing all night, and the daylight had stolen on him so gradually, that he had neglected to extinguish the companion of his task. It was now noon, and a cup of half drunk coffee stood beside him; but it was cold, the remains of the evening before. There were no books,—he had parted with the few that he had, but a quantity of papers were scattered about. The slanting sunbeams kindled the thick air; long lines of dusky and tremulous golden atoms mocked the gloom which surrounded them; and Norbourne, as he breathed the thick atmosphere, did not wonder that Walter even coughed with difficulty.

"As busy," said he, "and are you as enthusiastic as ever?"

"Ah, no!" exclaimed Walter; "I no longer believe in

"Wonders wrought by single hand!"

"And yet," replied Norbourne, "all great discoveries have been the result of single endeavour. We owe the Iliad, America, and the Protestant faith, to individual effort!"

"The instances you have quoted," replied the other, "are certainly very encouraging! Homer past a life in blindness and beggary; Columbus, in vain solicitation and feverish disappointment: and Luther's was spent in struggle, imprisonment, and danger. The benefactors of mankind are so at their own expense!"

"This is very different," cried Courtenaye, "from your early creed; then you held the onward-looking hope, and the internal consciousness, to be the noblest incentives, and the best rewards, of high endeavour."

"Then," replied the other, "I believed and hoped; now, alas! there are times when I do neither. I would give worlds to recall my early eagerness of composition, and my reliance on the mind's influence."

"You cannot doubt that influence," interrupted Norbourne: "from our veriest infancy we feed upon the thoughts of the dead; even your own strong and original mind has been cultivated by others. I never enter a library without being grateful to those whose moral existence has formed my own. Our sages, *our poets, have left a world behind, formed of*

all that is good, beautiful, and true in our own. Not a life but owes to them some of its happiest hours; they are our favourites, our old, familiar friends."

"How happy," said Maynard, "would one half the praise and the honour lavished on an author after his death have made him during his lifetime! Let the grave close over the hand that has laboured through feverish midnights,—over the warm heart that beat so painfully; let the ear be closed to that applause which was its sweetest music;—and then how lavish we grow of all that was before so harshly denied! Then the marble is carved with eulogium; then the life is written; and thousands are lavish of pity and sympathy: every thing is given when it is too late to give any thing!"

"But you, my dear Walter," interrupted his friend, "are a successful writer;

"Your works are charming, for they sell;

and you are yourself a welcome guest, flattered!"

"You have used the right word," interrupted the young poet, colouring; "I am flattered, because flattery is a sort of commerce, and I give more than I get. My works sell; but look at the amount of labour, and calculate how poor is the recompense! half that toil, half that talent, given to any other pursuit, would have insured wealth. Then, as to society, what do I gain by my admission there? First, my spirits, which I need for my own pursuits, are exhausted in the effort to amuse; and, secondly, I have the opportunity of contrasting idleness and luxury with the toil and privation of my own lot."

"Then, dear Walter," said Courtenaye, "why not accept my uncle's offer?"

"Nay," exclaimed the other, "to sell my mind, appears to me only renewing the old bargain with the devil, selling your soul!"

"I never did, and never shall, urge the subject upon you," answered his companion; "but I have another proposal to make to you, which involves no sacrifice of political opinion. Sir George Kingston is in want of a secretary, and caught eagerly at my mention of you. Between ourselves, I suspect the office will be a sinecure; but Sir George affects literature, and will prove a most liberal patron, were it only for the air of the thing."

"And you have been thinking of me, and planning for my benefit; while, shall I confess, that I have been reproaching you in my secret heart with having forgotten me!" exclaimed Walter, to whose impetuous feelings confession was a relief.

"If you knew," resumed the other, "how my last few weeks have been spent, you would not blame, but pity me. My dear Walter, there is a wretchedness that shuns even its nearest friend: but let us talk of yourself. I have made your going to Sir George a sufficient favour, and taken upon myself all the needful arrangements. Your salary is high; you are to have apartments in the house; and to be the autocrat of the library, where, I

reudly suspect, your reign will be undis-
urbed."

"How kind you are!" whispered his list-
ner.

"And now, will you dress?" said Courte-
nye; "for I have promised to take you to
breakfast with Sir George. He is impatient
to secure you, and we are to be in Spring
gardens by two o'clock. He will expect us;
I am, what he calls, 'disgracefully punc-
tual!'"

CHAPTER XCIV.

INTRODUCTION.

In the ancestral presence of the dead
Sits a lone power; a veil upon the head,
Stern with the terror of an unseen dread.

It sitteth cold, immutable, and still,
Girt with eternal consciousness of ill,
And strong and silent as its own dark will.

We are the victims of its iron rule,
The warm and beating human heart its tool,
And man immortal, godlike, but its fool.

THE church clock struck two, an example
followed, during the next quarter of an hour,
half a dozen timepieces, as Courtenaye and
his companion entered the room where Sir
George Kingston, half dressed, half lounged,
was morning away. The walls were hung
with damask, of a rich Indian red; he used
to contend, that pale colours were a mistake
in a sombre atmosphere like that of Eng-
land.

"Very well to subdue the glowing noon of
day with your cold sea-green, but here we
need a little interior crimson, to remind us
that there is such a thing as warmth in the
world."

Several pictures, all representing human
and beautiful life, hung round; and china and
crystal, that a lady might have envied, were
scattered about. The windows looked over
the park, and were filled with exotics; while
panes of coloured glass threw rainbow gleams
of coloured light over the alabaster vases, and
over two exquisite statues. The breakfast
table was drawn to the open casement; and,
beside the large arm-chair beside was Lavinia,
dressed fancifully, somewhat over richly for
a morning, but looking both picturesque and
handsome. Sir George was thrown, at full
length, on the sofa; a small table, covered
with books, drawn close towards him; among
which, the plays, poems, and pamphlets of
Maynard were conspicuous.

"Punctual to the moment!" exclaimed he:
what a bad heart, Courtenaye, you must
have! I can understand no other motive for
man's being punctual, but a desire of putting
the rest of the world to shame."

"I had no such magnificent motive," re-
plied Norbourne, smiling; "my only one was
to introduce Mr. Maynard to you."

"I can forgive punctuality in such a cause,"
said Sir George, with his most courteous man-
ner; "but I rather feel," glancing at the
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table, "as if I were renewing my acquaint-
ance with an old friend, than making a new
one."

Walter could not but feel gratified by such
a reception.

"I need not," continued his host, "present
you to Lavinia, she being your own especial
creation. Pray, did you make your 'Coquette'
for her?"

"Say, rather," interrupted the actress, "that
I made it for him. But that reminds me that
our parts are to be cast in the new opera to-
day; mine is to be all sweetness and sim-
plicity!"

"Nay," said Mr. Courtenaye, "do not
leave us so soon!"

"I cannot afford," said she, laughing, "to
lose a single air or grace on your account.
What is the homage of three cavaliers, com-
pared with that of half the town?" and, rising
from her seat, she left the room, humming one
of those delicious airs, which afterward made
the *Beggars' Opera* so popular.

"That last speech," exclaimed Sir George,

'Might serve as motto to all womankind!'

it is the much and the many for which they
care!"

"I am amazed," interrupted Norbourne,
"to hear you say so; you, who have so many
devoted to you, and you only!"

"That is the very reason they are devoted;
if I had only myself to offer, who would care
for that? but when the triumph is over half a
dozen rivals, even my unworthy self becomes
an object of consideration! It is not," con-
tinued Kingston, "that they wish so much
to have me themselves, as to take me away
from others!"

"Do you never," asked Walter, "fear the
fate of Orpheus?"

"O! that," replied Sir George, languidly,
"was merely an allegory of my actual exist-
ence. I, literally, am torn to pieces; I shall
be obliged to marry some day, by way of pro-
tection!"

'Ay, there are moments when my thoughts disclose,
A dreadful moment, dark with future woes!"

at present, however, I have no intention of al-
lowing any woman to carry so selfish a design
into execution!"

"'Bold were her deed who sought in chains to bind
The great destroyer of half of womankind!'"

replied Courtenaye.

"Really, we ought not to broach such me-
lancholy subjects," exclaimed Sir George,
"my spirits are not equal to them of a morn-
ing. Here, La Fleu! bring some champagne,
and do let us talk of something less alarming!
Have you read Pope's last three books of the
'Odyssey?'"

"Yes," answered Maynard, to whom the
question was addressed; "Pope reverses the
former system of writing: the ancients traced
their characters in wax, but his are transcribed
in honey!"

"What diverts me the most," continued Sir
George, "is, Ulysses being always called
'the much enduring man.' After all his tem-

years of wandering are past, pleasantly enough, the greater portion of them being spent with Circe and Calypso—to be sure, it was rather tiresome staying so long with the last—how he must have enjoyed his flirtation with the Phœnician princess!”

“Certainly, this is a new view to take of Ulysses!” replied Courtenaye.

“The truth is always a novelty,” returned Kingston; “but I have always considered the patient Ulysses, the model of a classical coquette: you may get many useful hints from his career.”

“I shall go home at once,” said Norbourne, rising, “and begin to study the ‘Odyssey,’ on new principles!”

“The blue-eyed goddess forbid that I should interfere with any such laudable intention! but you must return to dinner,” said Sir George, “and then Mr. Maynard and I will tell you how we like each other; not but what I have quite made up my mind on the subject.”

The next hour was devoted to making a favourable impression on his secretary during their *tête-à-tête*, and in this he completely succeeded. Walter could scarcely help being pleased with the graceful flattery of his host, which, to him, seemed to be so wholly without motive; but, to be popular, was Sir George’s passion; moreover, he fully intended to use Maynard’s talents to the utmost, and he knew enough of human nature to know, that when we serve those we like, the service is well performed. He showed the stranger to his rooms, attended to several minute arrangements for his comfort, and ended by showing him into the library, where every luxury of literature was lavished.

“And now,” said he, balancing himself on one of the tables, “as I intend we are to be friends, I must tell you my faults: or, rather, my fault. Do you remember what some one wrote over the grave of Madame la Duchesse d’Orleans? *Ci-gît l’oisiveté*, idleness being the mother of all the vices, these said vices being all very accurately represented by her daughters. I do not know whether idleness has been quite so productive with me, but I know that it is my besetting sin; I hate being obliged to do any thing; I want you to do every thing that I ought; to write for me, think for me, feel for me!”

“I perceive,” exclaimed Maynard, laughing, “that mine is not to be a sinecure office!”

“O,” returned the other, “you may always leave, at least, half undone of whatever I ask you to do; I only make an exception in favour of my love-letters, there you may do a little more: in those sort of affairs, it is always safe to exaggerate!”

“You do not mean to say,” exclaimed the secretary, looking the surprise he felt, “that I am to write your loveletters!”

“Indeed I do!” answered Sir George: “you will find it a great deal more amusing, than if I wanted you to write either pamphlets or speeches. The fact is, that I am too good an actor, to succeed as an author. I do assure

you, that when *en scene*, I am often surprised at my own readiness of resource, but I need stimulus. I cannot sit down by myself, and fill four sides of paper, which said time might be so much more amusingly employed; no, life is not long enough to write letters!”

“But how,” cried Walter, “can I possibly know what to say?”

“You must invent!” replied the other: “fancy that you are in love with the lady yourself!”

“But what I might like to say, may or may not suit the circumstances.”

“O,” said Sir George, “I shall give you the outline, but the filling up must rest with yourself. There, sit down in that arm-chair; loveletters should always be written in a comfortable position!”

Walter obeyed; and, drawing towards him the mother-of-pearl inkstand, prepared to begin.

“I have only three affairs,” continued Kingston, “on my hands at present, of sufficient importance to warrant my committing pen, ink, and paper, which always appears to me an expedient to be reserved for the last extremity of *une grande passion*. To one only of these do I propose drawing your attention this morning.”

He opened an embroidered portfolio; and, from its perfumed depths, took out a letter, which he began to read aloud. Involuntarily, Walter became interested; there was an earnest sadness, and a poetry about it, which spoke no common writer.

“You see,” said Sir George, throwing it down on the table for Walter to see if he liked it, though it never even entered into Maynard’s head to look at it, “there is scope for your genius. She is romantic—clever—needs excitement; and, therefore, flavours her affection with a handsome seasoning of remorse. I shall expect a master-piece from you to-night; till then adieu, and pray feel as much at home with me, as I do with you. By-the-by,” added he, turning back from the door, “be sure you fill the paper; women judge of the strength of your attachment by the length of your letters!”

Walter drew the papers towards him; at first he hesitated, but the pride of art gradually arose. The letter soon became mere matter of composition; it was written, the writer fully satisfied with his own impassioned eloquence, and then put aside for Sir George’s approval. This completed, Walter leant back in his chair, and gave way to a pleasant wonder at the change in his own situation. In the morning he had scarcely known which way to turn;—poor, harassed, overworked. Now, he had a luxurious home, a certain salary, and might work little or much, as he pleased.

“What a folly,” exclaimed he, “are our own exertions; every thing depends upon a lucky chance in this world!”

Walter was wrong; but I own I tremble at the fatality which sometimes seems to hang over our slightest actions. How often do we

d ourselves involved in sudden misery and happiness, by circumstances over which we have no control! and we ask bitterly; "What have I done to deserve this?" Not in this world will be the answer!

CHAPTER XCV.

RETURN TO COURTENAYE HALL.

Ah! never another dream can be
Like that early dream of ours,
When Hope, like a child, lay down to sleep
Amid the folded flowers.

But Hope has waken'd since, and wept
Itself, like a rainbow, away;
And the flowers have faded, and fallen around,
We have none for a wreath to-day.

Now, Truth has taken the place of Hope,
And our hearts are like winter hours;
Little has after-life been worth
That early dream of ours.

CHANGE is the universal prescription for a muddled spirit. "It will do you so much good," is the constant remark. Perhaps it is; but how reluctant is any one who is suffering mentally, to try it! There is an imitation about secret and subdued sorrow, which peculiarly unfits you for exertion; you are discontented with all that is around you, and yet you shrink from alteration; it is too much trouble; you do not feel in yourself even energy enough for the ordinary demands of life. This was the case of Norbourne Courtenaye. The morning after her conversation with Miss Churchill, Lady Marchmont had written a note, stating its result, to Lord Norbourne, who had placed the note in his new's hands. Norbourne, for his uncle's sake, made a strong effort to appear indifferent; and, by a tacit consent, the plan was never made a subject of discourse between them again. But he suffered keenly and deeply; the more so, because it was no longer duty to subdue his regrets. He had, and he loved Ethel, wholly and fondly; he felt at he could never love another, and he sunk from the solitude of his own heart. It had been, for some time, necessary for him to visit the Hall, and yet he had delayed going. He shrunk from all that it would entail; he shrunk from change, because he felt that monotony was a resource. On his rival, his mother was startled to see how ill he looked; but people who reside entirely in the country, are apt to lay a great deal to London, of which that poor, dear, ill-used city, is completely innocent. She never doubted that little fresh country air would quite restore him; and when she saw him, as usual, pass a great part of every day out of doors, she was, for the time, quite satisfied. Time was to work wonders; and, at least, accustomed her to the change that had at last appeared so startling in his appearance. It could she have seen the listless manner which he wandered through the woods, the carelessness with which he would fling himself on the damp grass, her natural anxiety would have been alive even to agony. I believe that one great reason why the suffering mind is so often followed by suffering

of the body is, that we are so indifferent about it, that we do not care to take even those ordinary precautions which are taken almost unconsciously in general. There is nothing in life worth attention, not even ourselves.

One evening, lost in one of those melancholy reveries which had become his chief occupation, Norbourne lingered too late on the banks of his favourite lake. The twilight had been one of unusual beauty; the rich crimson, which had kindled the waters with transitory radiance, died gradually into faint violet, and the whispering of the leaves had sank into a deep silence, unbroken even by the distant sheep-bell, which had been one of the latest sounds. It was the dark quarter of the moon; but the stars came out, one after another, upon the cloudless heaven; those stars, sad and soft, which have so much fanciful, and so little real, sympathy with earth: not in their pure, calm light, can the destinies of life be written. Never had Norbourne felt more lonely; there were a thousand thoughts and fancies gushing at his heart, which he longed to share, but which must now remain forever unshared. He looked back to his hurried and feverish life in London, and felt how much happier was the one that he had formerly planned to himself. With Ethel for his companion, he would have desired no happiness beyond his own hearth, no sphere of utility beyond his native hills.

The evening wore away, and the long grass was silvery with dew; the consequence was what might have been expected,—next day, he was laid up with a violent cold; and the fever soon ran so high, that delirium came on; and before three days were past, his life hung upon a thread.

Mrs. Courtenaye hung over him in silent despair; and despair increased by all that escaped from his lips during the delirium of fever. Till the present moment, Mrs. Courtenaye had believed that her son's attachment had been merely a boyish passion; eager and romantic at the time, but leaving no after-trace on the character. The delicate silence that he had observed on the subject, tended to confirm this impression; but now that the heart was on the lips, uncurbed, and unconscious, the secret of that heart became her own. He spoke of Ethel continually; entreated her to forgive him; deprecated her coldness; and implored her to retract her refusal.

In putting aside the various papers that were about him when taken ill, Lady Marchmont's note fell into her hands. She read it, among others, requiring immediate answer, little, till then, supposing that it had been kept, with all the bitterness of memory, for months. Its contents were as follows:—

"DEAR LORD NORBOURNE,—I regret having to communicate what has been the result of my conversation with Miss Churchill; I am afraid that all women are a little unforgiving, when the inconstancy of a lover is to be pardoned. I see clearly that nothing will induce her to listen to Mr. Courtenaye. Ethel is

gentle and timid, but there is, also, a degree of firmness, for which I did not give her credit. The sooner the matter is put an end to, the better. Life presents too brilliant an aspect to Mr. Courtenaye, not to console him for a single disappointment; that it may be his last, is the sincere wish of one who is,

Most sincerely, your obliged
"HENRIETTA."

The note dropped from Mrs. Courtenaye's hand. What! then her son had still cherished his old attachment! He had offered, and been refused! There was that in her own nature, which sympathized with the pride, for such she held to be the motive, dictating the refusal. Then, resentment for her son's suffering became the predominant feeling. This could not last: and, for the first time, she thought what Ethel's sorrow might have been—sorrow that might well turn to after bitterness.

To find that you have been deceived, where you trusted so entirely; trifled with, where all your deepest and sweetest emotions had been called into life, is the most acute—the most enduring sorrow of which that life is capable. Mrs. Courtenaye started to think that she had never considered the matter in this light before.

CHAPTER XCVI.

THE SICK-ROOM.

'Tis midnight, and a starry shower
Weeps its bright tears o'er life and flower;
Sweet, silent, beautiful the night,
Sufficing for her own delight,
But other lights than sky and star,
From yonder casement gleam afar;
The lamp subdued to the heart's gloom
Of suffering, and of sorrow's room.

SINCE the commencement of her son's illness, Mrs. Courtenaye had never quitted his bedside, but when exhausted nature forced her to take that repose from which she shrunk. To-night she took her accustomed place; for, during the night, no vigilance could satisfy her but her own: any eye but hers might close in momentary forgetfulness.

Down she sat, the lamp lighted, but its flame carefully screened from the sick man's face. The little table beside, supplied with all that could be needed, was at her side; her rosary in her hand, and again she began another vigil. Norbourne had at length fallen into a heavy sleep, and every hope hung on the state in which he might awaken from it. Mrs. Courtenaye could scarcely restrain herself from starting up in agony, when she thought on what the morrow might bring forth. The room was dark, but she was accustomed to its dim light, and there was not a feature in that white face—white as the pillow on which it rested—in which the slightest change was not distinctly visible to her. She rose, and bent over the sleeper: there was something in the utter helplessness of sickness that reminded her of infancy. A lapse of years went by, and she did not see the young man laid before her, but the little child, that loved no one but

herself, whose whole world was fashion herself; she felt that her whole life had been devoted to him; and yet, had her object accomplished? was he happy? and answer seemed to come, cold and distinct—No!

Mrs. Courtenaye had never forgiven her husband the deception, or rather the thoughtlessness, that marked his conduct towards her. From the moment that she became aware of her real position, a feeling of mingled grief and coldness arose, which no kindness or even submission, on his part, ever softened again. She was at once humiliated and bittered; but the warm heart, and the mind, must have an object; and her sympathy, equally with her affections, had concealed themselves on her son.

In urging his marriage with Constance had been actuated, quite as much by consideration for him, as for herself; but now it appeared to her only selfishness; she had urged her own account. Of an unyielding nature herself, she had exaggerated Norbourne's determination, who could never have acted upon the knowledge he possessed; but now she only thought how her entreaties had wrought with him. She cleared the mist that had gathered round her sight, and looked long and earnestly at the face of the patient. There were signs of recovery not to be mistaken; the flush had died away, and the breathing was regular; she ventured to touch the forehead with her lips, it was cool, and the pulse was subdued. Again she resumed her seat, and the expression of her countenance was changed; the working of some strong emotion in the troubled lines of her mouth. Gradually the fine features settled into a lofty and noble composure; the eyes, large and dark, were filled with a light, spiritual and calm; she rested the crucifix on the table; and, kneeling before it, was, for some moments, absorbed in earnest prayer. She clasped her hands, and raised them towards heaven, when her attention was disturbed by the faint movement of the invalid. She sprung to the bedside in that moment; Norbourne was just awaking, his eyes slowly unclosed; and for the first time for many days, he was sensible he was bending over him; and the first faint expression of returning consciousness were,

"My mother! my dear mother!"

CHAPTER XCVII.

LADY MARCHMONT'S JOURNAL.

We might have been!—these are but common words
And yet they make the sum of life's bewailing
They are the echo of those finer chords,
Whose music life deplores when unavailing.
We might have been

Alas! how different from what we are,
Had we but known the bitter path before us
But feelings, hopes, and fancies, left afar,
What in the wide, bleak world can o'er restore us
We might have been

It is now a fortnight since I have seen him.
How often have I wished that he had!

are; and yet but for this absence, I
er have had his letters; I should
known him as I now do. What a
ought and of feeling have they not

Till now, I never did him justice.
etimes thought him, in conversa-
ely amusing; too ready to laugh
sm,—at what is most true and gene-
nature. How wrong I was! wit,
was only the sparkle of the waters
precious things in the depths be-
n enter into the sensitiveness which

Keep that which it prizes most
den from a cold and mocking world.
pletely into his scorn of our pre-
ociety, so false, so mean; and
scarcely prepared for this dark mi-
which dissects so unsparingly, and
cold, searching light, into all the
retreats of our small vanities and
ensions.

se we are, how unkind! I do not
can quite force myself to follow in
of his glorious aspirations for the
how I respect him for the belief!
me ever come, when men will feel
nd and the heart must work in con-
nat we must look around and afar
piness; that our great mistake has
arrow circle to which we are con-
it good? Alas! there is a weight
pirits; my wings are of wax, they
effort that would seek the heavens.
of this originates in my own pecu-
n: it is a hard one, and a false

r George Kingston; love him with
most tender in my feelings, most
my thoughts. I could be happy
w his happiness. Had we met in
us, my existence would at once
its object; there would not have
perpetual struggle between myself
cumstances. Too late do I find
is woman's only element; to
k up, is her destiny; and, if unful-
ing can supply its place. Life has
usiness for her beyond the sweet
her own heart dwelling in the sha-
ther's. She may crowd her days
ty, variety, and what are called
s; she will do so only to find their
y. She needs the strength of duty,
erest of affection. But I—I trem-
happiness! my life is a struggle
feelings and my circumstances!

I wish that I had never seen him,
have not courage to deny myself
een such an unutterable source of

nge, but I love him best in his ab-
n my imagination creates all that
all that I admire in him grows the
memory's setting: then I can ima-
stance that enables me to show my
ion without a fault. I start back
n horror, when I remember what
ay think of me. The love which
my pride, the dearest hope which

—18

earth can raise to heaven, to me is degradation
and misery. The deceit that I practise to-
wards Lord Marchmont sinks me to his own
level. I despise him: alas! I should rather
despise myself.

She flung the pen down, and began to pace
the room with those hurried steps which so
often indicate the troubled mind, the inward
suffering—fear, mingled with remorse: there
was, unconfessed even to herself, a still and
hushed dread that the worst was yet to come.
Lady Marchmont already began to shrink from
the future.

CHAPTER XCVIII.

DISCOVERY.

Who, that had look'd on her that morn,
Could dream of all her heart had borne?
Her cheek was red, but who could know
'Twas flushing with the strife below?
Her eye was bright, but who could tell
It shone with tears she strove to quell?
Her voice was gay, her step was light,
And beaming, beautiful, and bright:
It was as if life could confer
Nothing but happiness on her.
Ah! who could think that all so fair
Was semblance, and but misery there!

"I CANNOT understand the cause of Sir
George Kingston's not calling this morning;
he knows that I am returned to town:" and
a flush of haughty anger coloured Lady March-
mont's brow; but the colour deepened when
she looked at the timepieces, and had been ex-
pecting him for hours. How many changes
had passed over her mind during that time!
At first, there had been only that intense and
passionate delight which fills the very soul at
the thought of seeing a beloved object. Gra-
dually came on the wonder of the loving heart,
that any thing in the world could induce him
to delay such happiness. Then thoughts, less
entirely of eager and uncalculating affection,
intervened:—the flattered and spoiled beauty
was surprised that she should be kept waiting.
But mortification was of short endurance.
Henrietta felt too deeply for small vanity, she
soon grew anxious; and if there be one torture
which the demons, who delight in human
misery, might rejoice to inflict, it is the
anxious suspense of love acting upon an ima-
ginative temperament. It is extraordinary the
power of creation with which the mind seems
suddenly endowed, and only to suppose the
worst. Death, sickness, crime, misfortune,—
these are the images which start upon the soli-
tude made fearful with their presence. But
there mingled among them, for Lady March-
mont, a spectre darker than the rest—remorse.
Whatever sorrow might be hanging over her
head, and her punishment might be greater
than she could bear, she bitterly acknowledged
that it would be just.

At this moment a note was brought in, its
perfume reached her before itself. She knew
it was from Sir George.

"Any answer?" asked she, with a careless

coldness, belied by her flushed cheek and trembling hand.

"None," replied the servant; and Lady Marchmont was left alone; only then had she courage to open it. It contained a few hasty lines:—

"How have I offended you? Twice have I called this morning, and each time you have been peremptorily denied. What unknown crime, Henrietta—if I dare still call you so—have I committed? Shall you be at Lady Townshend's masked ball to-night? In the course of the evening I shall send you some flowers; I implore you to wear them. Not but what I should know you under any disguise; still wear them as a sign that I may hear my fate from your lips. Till then, as through life,

Your devoted servant,
GEORGE KINGSTON."

Lady Marchmont read the note in mute astonishment. She clasped her hands for a moment tightly together, and the blood sprang from the bitten lip; she then slowly, but calmly, approached the table and rang the hand bell. The servant immediately appeared.

"Did you misunderstand my orders?" said she. "I desired Mademoiselle Cecile to say, that I should be at home this morning."

The man appeared a little embarrassed, and replied with some hesitation:—"Lord Marchmont has, perhaps, forgotten to tell your ladyship that he gave the porter a list of names, including all those who were henceforth never to be admitted; and it so happens, your ladyship, that the list includes almost all who have called to-day."

"If such were Lord Marchmont's orders, of course they are also mine," replied Henrietta, with desperate calmness.

The man left the room, and she sank back, pale and cold, on the sofa; but her agony was too great for fainting. There could be but one motive for Lord Marchmont's conduct; and yet she felt almost grateful to him. He had not exposed her to general comment: Sir George Kingston was only excluded among others. She had not given him credit for so much delicacy; it touched her to the heart: she felt capable of any sacrifice to repay it.

At that moment she heard Lord Marchmont's step upon the stairs. A world of agony was in the next few moments; every slow and heavy step of her husband fell, like a death-blow, upon Henrietta's ear. The door opened, and she cowered among the cushions of the couch. She had resolved to confess all, to implore his pardon, to submit never to see Sir George again; but now the words died upon her lips, and there she leant, pale and breathless, with what just seemed to herself strength to hear the worst, and then die upon the spot. She had not courage to look up. Lord Marchmont approached in his usual deliberate manner, seated himself in an arm-chair opposite, and said,—

"I have some more than usually pleasant intelligence this morning—intelligence I was not authorized to communicate till within the last hour."

Henrietta could scarcely believe her ears; there was any thing but anger or jealousy in the tones of his voice; and when, at last, he ventured to catch his eye, there was only his usual calm expression of self-complacency.

"I have just seen," continued he, "Sir Robert Walpole, who has honoured me with a long and confidential conversation. I now completely comprehend his views."

Bewildered as Henrietta felt, the quotation from the old ballad rose to her memory when she heard Lord Marchmont talk of comprehending Sir Robert's views,—

"But what's impossible cannot be,
And never, never comes to pass;"

but she preserved a discreet silence, and her lordship continued:—

"Our admirable and patriotic minister has agreed with me in the necessity of drawing our party as much together as possible. An immense deal may be done by conciliating, and I have promised Sir Robert to give a series of splendid entertainments."

The fact was, that Walpole had been utter despair what to do with their new acquisition, he was so useless in every way. At length Lord Norbourne started the brilliant idea of making him dinner-giver to their party. People forgive their host being a bore, when the fact is all but concealed by champagne and venison.

"It is fortunate," added Lord Marchmont, "that I am not jealous, or I should have been quite alarmed at Sir Robert's eulogiums of your beauty."

"I am much obliged," said the countess coldly, who was turning in her mind the best way of introducing the interdicted list.

Lord Marchmont saved her the trouble. "I quite forgot to see you this morning before I went out. Let me tell you now, while I think of it, that I gave the porter a list, this morning, of every one of our acquaintance who has the least leaning to the other side, that, in future, they might not obtain admittance;" saying, he gave his wife also a list of names. "I copied them out for you, that you might avoid them in public."

"Why," exclaimed Henrietta, "you have included all the pleasantest people that we know; many, too, of your oldest acquaintances."

"I cannot," said his lordship, with a solemn air, "allow my own feelings to interfere with my duty to my country; but I know that you do not understand these things. You must," said he, pausing on the threshold of the door, "be content to obey."

"Obey!" muttered Henrietta, with a scornful sneer, as she sank back on the sofa. Still she felt too sad for scorn long to be the predominant emotion; and she yielded to the sadness—it was an atonement. That night she resolved to see Sir George Kingston, and bid him farewell forever.

CHAPTER XCIX.

THE MASKED BALL.

is up of vanities—so small,
is common history of the day,—
ery seems the sole philosophy.
stern truth starts up—cold, sudden, strange;
taught what life is by despair:—
he trifles, and the petty cares,
othingness—we know their worth;
avenges every careless thought,
us feel that fate is terrible.

many mirrors called into requisition. Lady Townshend's *fête*, not one gave a truer likeness than that which reflected the face and form of Lady Marchmont. Dressed after a picture which had been in her imagination from a child, in a collection. It was called "The Artist," but the real name, for it was a portrait, and that of the artist, had been forgotten. The style of costume was peculiar and striking; but it suited her as much as it had done the former. The robe was of black velvet, fitting shape, with large, loose, hanging sleeves edged with scarlet silk. Round the waist a rope of pearls, from which hung tassels; and the deep border was of various, forming an Etruscan pattern of grotesque characters.

There were no ornaments on the neck and shoulders. Lady Marchmont had used up all of hers to form the curious headpiece of the picture. The hair was formed into a thick braid, which went round and round the head: amid the folds of this was a serpent of precious stones, whose scales of rubies and diamonds, rose out behind, and made a sort of crest. The wings, about the size of a butterfly, on either side of the serpent's head; the ornaments, of which they were composed, caught every ray of passing light.

There was a bouquet of red and white flowers. She had been sent that evening, with a line,—"I hope and I fear!" The man who first likened his mistress' eyes to the night, must have gazed on such orbs as those of that young and lovely countess. The moonlight—clear, melancholy, and calm; but there was also the shadow of a coming storm—the radiance that is of the sun, and the darkness that is of the night. There was a troubled and unquiet gleam in those dark black eyes, which revealed the passionate workings of the fevered and the beating heart. The cheek had turned to the richest crimson; and there was a quiver about the muscles of the face which betrays, more than any other expression, the subdued emotion.

There was a under the influence of strong emotion; every nerve had been overstrained that day, and they were now braced for a forced composure of a desperate resolve. She was too agitated to rest: more than once she opened a volume, but only to shut it again without reading a single

line; and then, starting from her seat, she resumed her hasty walk up and down the room.

The chair being announced, she fastened on her mask, and drew her domino round her, it not being her intention to display her splendid and fantastic costume till supper, when all the guests were expected to unmask. On her entrance into the ball-room, she drew her dark envelope more closely round; but in her hand there were the red and white roses.

"Ah, I needed not those signal flowers," said a low, sweet voice; and, garbed as a Spaniard, which suited well with his stately figure, Sir George Kingston came to her side. She took his arm in silence; all she had intended to say seemed like the words of a dream; for a few, a very few, moments she could be alive to nothing but the happiness of his presence.

Love has to every one its separate emotions; but there is one sensation common to all—the hurried, confused pleasure, which puts every thing else aside, of meeting.

Lady Marchmont heard none of the voices around her, saw nothing of the glittering crowd; her eyes were fixed on the ground. She did not venture to look at her companion; and yet her whole being was absorbed in his. While away from him she had framed her discourse, she had arranged the many reasons of farewell, she had convinced with argument, she had subdued him with entreaty; and now that she was at his side, what did she say?—nothing! and is not this a common case? Who ever said one-half of all that seemed in absence so easy to say?

The rooms at Lady Townshend's were much crowded, and there was something very odd in the quaint and strange looking figures that were assembled. Princesses, nuns, knights, pilgrims, bandits, and monks, mixed together with a superb defiance of the historical truths of costume that would have driven an antiquary mad.

But there always is in my mind something at once ludicrous and mournful in a crowd congregated for the purpose of amusement. What discontent, what vanity, move the complicated wheels of the social machine! There are many pleasures that one can comprehend, and even go the length of admitting, that they are worth some trouble in endeavouring to obtain; but the mania of filling your house with guests of whom you know little, and for whom you care nothing, is only less incomprehensible than why they should be at the trouble of coming to you.

The Arabs of the desert, who gather beneath the shadow of the palm tree to listen to some tale of wild enchantment, have an actual pleasure. The moonlight shows their dark eyes kindling with eager enjoyment, as they hear how the warrior gained his beautiful maiden at last. But this is not the case with our modern assemblings; no one can accuse them of wearing faces of eager enjoyment. They are *blasé* and languid: to-morrow they

will admit how tired they were of the party of the previous night; but the admission is made on their way to another.

Lady Townshend's *fête* was no exception to the general rule, excepting, perhaps, that a masquerade, by having a character for wit to support, is a little more wearisome, by being more forced than any thing else.

Lady Mary Wortley, who was there in her pretty oriental dress, accurate from the gold embroidered slippers to the sprig of jessamine in her plaited hair, thought it rather more tiresome than usual; for, by ill luck, Lord Marchmont had stationed himself at her side; and for a dull man to attempt persiflage, is more than mortal patience can endure. Glancing round, she saw Lady Marchmont and Sir George Kingston, whom her quick eye had recognised at once, enter a balcony which looked towards the garden.

"I tell you, *beau masque*," said her ladyship, "you are wasting time upon me that might be much better bestowed. There is Sir George Kingston busy making love to your wife. Don't you think that you had better look a little after her?"

"O, I am not at all alarmed," replied Lord Marchmont.

"Well," replied Lady Mary, "there is some Christian charity left in this wicked world. It is quite charming of you to devote yourself to the amusement of the town as you do. Why, everybody is laughing at your blindness."

"How very ridiculous!" exclaimed he.

"Is Lord Marchmont talking of himself?" asked a mask behind: but while his lordship turned round to discover who was his new tormentor, Lady Mary effected her escape; and Lord Marchmont, finding himself near no one that he knew, began to consider whether he might not as well follow her advice.

Lady Mary's had been just a random assertion, only thrown out to get rid of a wearisome companion; and yet to what important consequences it led! But it is the inevitable consequence of guilt, it places its punishment on a chance; and that chance is sure to occur.

CHAPTER C.

A SCENE AT THE MASQUERADE.

I do not say, bequeath unto my soul
Thy memory, I rather ask forgetting;
Withdraw, I pray, from me thy wrong control;
Though, that withdrawn, what has life worth regretting?
Alas! this is a miserable earth!
Too late, or else too soon, the heart-beat quickens:
Hope finds too late its light was nothing worth,
And round a dark and final vapour thickens.

THE silken folds of the crimson curtain which hung over the window, and a stand of odoriferous plants, almost concealed the balcony where Henrietta and Sir George were standing. Behind them were the illuminated rooms, from whence came gleams of light as the curtains waved to and fro; and the sound

of voices, lost in the music, swept but softened towards them.

Below was the garden, a scene of complete tranquillity; the trees were old and thickly grown, the lights from the windows seemed to play over their dense foliage, but not to penetrate it.

The air rose fresh and sweet, and Henrietta had taken off her mask. The face was pale as the moonlight which fell over it, and her large, sad eyes were raised towards Sir George, with an expression so hopeless, so depressing, that even he shrank from meeting them.

"You know that I love you," said she, in a low, faint whisper,—"love you as those love who have but a single object on which the affections can fix. I love you miserably, desperately!"

"But you love your own pride better," exclaimed her companion.

"Pride!—ah, no!" returned Henrietta. "I have no pride but in you. I could be content to be a slave, a beggar, for your sake. All that I ever read of my sex's devotion seems possible—nay, natural, when I think of what I feel for you. I should hold my life as nothing could it purchase your happiness."

"And yet," interrupted Sir George, "you can calmly, coldly condemn me to the most insupportable misery."

"I am very wretched," muttered she, near to herself than to him.

"Rather say capricious and inconstant," replied her companion.

"Alas!" replied she, "I deserve these reproaches for having ever listened to you. Sir George, I have done wrong, inexcusably wrong; but the hopeless, the dreary future that lies before me, might atone for my fault."

"And so you will," exclaimed he, "sacrifice me for Lord Marchmont, whom you both despise and hate?"

"I do despise, I do hate him!" returned Henrietta, bitterly; "but, not the less, I am his wife. Listen to me, Sir George. I cannot endure the humiliation of my own reproaches; to-morrow I will return your letter. I will, at least, try to avoid seeing you;—but, surely, that was a step."

"It was only the wind in the curtain," said Sir George, who, like herself, had started at some slight noise.

"Alas!" exclaimed she, "is not this very fear degrading? Why should I care that my words may be overheard? Why should I shrink from discovery?"

"Ah," exclaimed her companion, "if you loved me with but a shadow of the love that I bear towards you, you would not dread a little risk—it is but a little—for my sake."

"Ah," cried Henrietta, "do you think it is merely the consequence from which I shrink? Ah, if my own heart did but tell me that I was right, how little I should care for any thing else!"

"I care for nothing but yourself," interrupted her companion.

"Have you no pity for the misery that you will inflict upon me?"

Henrietta's voice failed her, she could only hang her hands with a passionate gesture of rest. Sir George saw his advantage, and stinued :—

'I know that it is selfish to urge my happiness; but, dearest! sweetest! it is so wholly your hands. But, you are pale, my bed; come in from the damp air.'

'You shall find my chair,' said Henrietta, stily; for the emotion with which she had tended was becoming too much for her. 'must go home.'

'You have scarcely been here half-an-hour;,' said he, making a merit of obedience, will not urge you stay, I see that you are equal to it. If you did but know how I ug on your least look, you would not dream depriving me even of but one of them.'

The chair was soon found; and, as Sir George turned away, he drew a deep breath. In my honour! a grand passion is very fa- aing. I have half a mind to take her as word—have one last scene of repentance, converted, and there let the matter end. t—no: an unfinished conquest is almost a cat. I cannot allow remorse to master e—love of which I am the object: it is not ag properly appreciated: I must throw in re despair. 'This do I, O, Athenians! for r applause,' exclaimed he, as he turned his club to see if he could find one or two asant friends for supper.

CHAPTER CI.

LORD MARCHMONT'S JEALOUSY.

You never loved me! never cared for me!
Had I been taken kindly to your heart,
This present misery were all unknown:
But I have been neglected and repell'd;
My best affections chill'd, or left to feed
Upon themselves. I have so needed love,
I should have loved you but from gratitude,
If you had let me.

HENRIETTA felt quite overcome with bodily isposition as she proceeded homewards. r hands were feverish, her temples throbbd with acute pain; she was wretched, but there a confusion in her thoughts; she seemed as t were impossible to dwell on any one sub- t for even a moment. A dead weight was n her spirits, they had been strained to the oost. Intending to lie down at once, she ran unfastening the glittering bands of her r even while going up stairs; but her hands k down, and she stood fixed on the threshold she entered.

There sat Lord Marchmont; having broken n her writing-desk, he was looking over letters; too well did his wife know what would discover. The very epistle that he s reading she recognised at once. The tents ran thus :—

'You say that you despise your husband, t but for dislike you would forget his very atence: your high and generous nature nges itself. It could have no sympathy th the true or the noble if it sympathized

with him. The great fault of his character must be its extreme littleness. There is not room for the warm blood to circulate, for the loftier emotion to expand. You—so sensi- tive, so high-minded—what can you have in common with him?'

The rustle of Henrietta's dress drew his at- tention; he looked up, and saw her standing, pale and motionless, on the threshold.

'You are earlier than I expected, madam,' exclaimed he, starting up, and leading, or rather dragging, her forward, 'considering in what agreeable society I left you! I am sure my house is much honoured by your re- turn; but you do not stay here long: I have a great mind to turn you into the streets to- night.'

Henrietta felt sinking, but she did not faint; the worst was come, and there was that in herself which seemed to rise to meet it. In a better cause, what fortitude, what endurance, would have belonged to her nature! even humiliated, self-convicted as she felt, her na- tive pride could not quite desert her. Still, the blood curdled at her heart, the lip trem- bled; but it could not yet force itself to speak.

'And so these pretty letters are addressed to my wife,' continued Lord Marchmont; 'a fine return for all my kindness! and to see, too, what you say of me! I always knew I was a great deal too good for you. But I'll tell you what, madam, all the town shall know of your infamous conduct; and you shall pass the rest of your life in a farmhouse in the country.'

'Ah! any miserable place,' murmured Henrietta, 'so that it be but solitude.'

'Where you could receive Sir George Kingston: but I will take care to prevent that,' interrupted he. 'I overheard all your con- versation to-night.'

'If you overheard our conversation,' ex- claimed Lady Marchmont, 'you overheard also my remorse. You know that, though imprudent, I am not guilty; and that I was myself about to break off a correspondence, whose fault, whose folly, none could feel more bitterly than I did myself.'

'I heard all you said about me,' interrupt- ed Lord Marchmont, not the least attending to what she was saying. 'I never knew such ingratitude! Look at your house, at your carriage; there was nothing in the world that you wanted.'

'Yes,' said Henrietta, 'what you never gave me—a heart. Lord Marchmont, I have done wrong, very wrong; but you have been wrong also.'

'O, yes! of course,' cried he, 'lay the blame upon me. It is a lucky thing that your uncle is dead, he would not like having you sent back disgraced on his hands.'

'Thank God that he cannot know my shame and misery!' exclaimed the countess, while the mention of her uncle brought the tears to her eyes; but they were not allowed to fall, they only glistened on the eyelash. 'Lord Marchmont,' continued she, 'you yourself know that I am what is called innocent; but

I do not for a moment extenuate the error I have committed. But I have some claims on your forbearance. Ask your own heart if it has ever shown to me that affection which is woman's best safety."

"How am I to be made answerable for the romantic nonsense which Sir George Kingston has put into your head?" asked he, angrily.

"Ah!" exclaimed she, "what I now urge I have felt ever since I arrived in London. You have never cared for me, or cautioned me against the many dangers which surrounded my vain and heedless career."

"How could I tell that you would turn out so badly?" again he asked.

"Lord Marchmont," cried Henrietta, "there is yet time to save me from utter wretchedness and crime. I am young, very young—forgive me, and my whole life shall be devoted to atone for the past, and to show my gratitude.

"And," answered he with a sneer, "you will take care not to be found out next time."

"I do not deserve this," said she. "Lord Marchmont, at your feet, I implore your pardon!" and she knelt as she spoke: "give me but one proof of your confidence, and my whole life shall show it has not been given in vain."

"Madam," said he, throwing her from him, "you forget how glad I shall be to get rid of you." So saying, he left the room, and she heard him order supper as he went downstairs.

The fact was, that Lord Marchmont had long disliked his wife: he did not understand her wit, and he feared it. The very admiration she inspired, displeased him: it gave him an uncomfortable feeling as to her superiority.

CHAPTER CIL.

THE LETTERS.

It is a weary and a bitter hour
When first the real disturbs the poet's world,
And he distrusts the future. Not for that
Should cold despondency weigh down the soul:
It is a glorious gift, bright poetry,
And should be thankfully and nobly used.
Let it look up to heaven!

"It is earlier than I thought," said Walter Maynard, as the sound of one of the French clocks disturbed the gloomy revery in which he had been plunged; "but I have not spirits to go out. Every day I feel more and more disinclined to the least exertion; and yet I never was in a position that demanded it more. Debts, difficulties, surround me on every side; and yet I cannot force myself to that employment which would soon release me from them.

"The iron has entered into my soul, and it weighs me down to earth. I cannot bear staying here, the office of Sir George's secretary is too degrading. To what use am I turning the talents once destined to achieve such lofty purposes! I am applying them to

the meanest deceptions,—to gratify the miserable vanity of a man, as much my inferior by nature as he is my superior by fortune. I cannot continue to live with Sir George: I despise him too thoroughly. Every day I decide on leaving him. I act against every sense I have of right in staying; and yet I lack the resolution to leave."

Walter leant his head upon his arm, and remained lost in thought. He did not take into consideration his shattered health; consumption had already begun its work, and he drooped beneath its fever—that fever whose reaction is languor. But he referred his distaste only to the mind, which he felt was exhausted and depressed within.

Few know the demands made by the imagination on those who are once its masters and its victims. Its exercise is so feverish, and so exciting; the cheek burns, the pulse beats aloud, the whole frame trembles with eagerness during the progress of composition. For the time you are what you create. The exhaustion of this process is not felt till some other species of exertion makes its demand on the already overwrought frame, the overstrained nerves begin to discover that they have been wound to the utmost. There is no strength left to bear life's other emotions.

Poverty, the effort made in society; love, fretted out of "the lovely land of dreams," by being often in the presence, and perpetually hearing of the object whose possession is hopeless;—all these combined to wear out Maynard's sensitive and shrinking frame. Moreover, there is a time when every writer asks himself, has he not followed the shadow, not the substance? that his noblest hopes, his most earnest aspirations, have been given those who know not what the gift has cost.

Fame seems afar off, and cold sunshine; and that eager readiness of thought, which found in the slightest thing matter for some graceful fancy, which at once sprang into music, seems cold and dead within us.

There are times when the poet marvels how he ever wrote, and feels as if he never could write again. Alas! it is this world's worst curse, that the body predominates over the mind; and this was just now the case with Walter Maynard.

He was roused from his meditation by a light touch on the shoulder: it was Lavinia Fenton, of whom he had lately seen but little. The fact was, he had carefully avoided her society; but to-night he felt glad of any one who broke in upon the gloomy shadow of his own thoughts.

"My cold is so bad to-night," said she, "that I cannot venture out; and, not knowing what to do with myself, came to see if I could find amusement here. I have found you, and that is better than nothing."

"I was just thinking," replied Walter, "that I was worse than nothing."

"Well, it is not every one," answered she, laughing, "who forms such a just estimate of themselves. I do not think that modesty is a virtue very often rewarded in this world;

however, I shall take upon myself to reward
t to-night by drinking tea with you."

"And I will tell you an idea that has struck
me," replied he, "as a good ground-work for
a drama. I do not know how it is, but I need
more encouragement than I used to do, to
begin any thing new. Now, talking over a
plan, is a sort of beginning; and, careless as
you are, you have an intuitive judgment."

"Because," interrupted the actress, "I see
things exactly as they are. I calculate my
effects, but they do not deceive myself; you,
on the contrary, live in a world of illusions,
where every thing is called by such an exceed-
ingly fine name, that it seems a downright
impertinence to ascertain what it really is."

"Why, as you say," exclaimed Walter,
'an epithet does go a great way. It is not
so much what a thing is, as what it is call-
ed."

Lavinia's only reply was, to hum a stanza
from the opera, then in its earliest popu-
larity:—

'Since laws were made for every degree,
For others, as well as for you and for me
I wonder we have not better company
On Tyburn tree.'

I am as hoarse as a raven, begging my own
pardon for the comparison. Now, what has
led to my train of thoughts to-night is, look-
ing over Sir George Kingston's loveletters."

"Does he show them to you?" asked Wal-
ter, with uncontrollable surprise.

"Why, what do you think he keeps them
for, but to show? They are really quite en-
couraging to me: there is not so much differ-
ence between the green-room and the drawing-
room; only to be sure, my coquetry is paid
for!"

"How little real love," said Maynard,
'there is in the world!—how many other
vaster feelings usurp its name!"

"They may," cried Lavinia, "be generally
classed under two heads,—idleness and vanity.
There are more love affairs originating in the
want of something to do, than from any other
motive. The lover and the physician are
each popular from the same cause—we talk to
them of nothing but ourselves; I dare say
that was the origin of confession—egotism,
under the fine name of religion."

"Sir George Kingston is very egotistical,"
said Walter; "I observe that, let the topic be
what it will, it winds round to himself!"

"You would not wonder," returned La-
vinia, "if you could but know the world of
lattery which he contrives to obtain. Believe
me, that a very vain man cannot do better
than devote himself to our sex; nowhere
else will he have his vanity so soothed, and
so fed."

"But," interrupted Walter, "it is man's
part to flatter women!"

"Not half so much as women flatter men,"
cried the actress. "We are more ingenious,
more refined and ready, than you are. Be-
sides, we imply, where you express; and
lattery, by implication, is the most subtle and
penetrating of all. And, lastly, there is more

of the heart in what we utter; we do feel a
little of what we say."

"And you mean to imply," exclaimed her
companion, "that we do not!"

"Yes," answered she. "I lay it down as
a rule, the truth of which all experience con-
firms, that every man behaves as ill as he
possibly can to every woman, under every
possible circumstance!"

"A sweeping censure!" cried Walter.

"And, like all sweeping censures," said
she, "if not true of, perhaps, one or two won-
derful exceptions, it applies strictly to the
generality. What man has the slightest
scruple as to gaining the confidence; making
himself not only necessary to her happiness,
but that very happiness itself; and then sa-
crificing her to vanity, caprice, or any slight
motive, that would not be held valid for one
moment in any other matter!"

"And yet," exclaimed Walter, "what a
delicious and a precious trust is that affection
which yields its sweetest hopes to your keep-
ing! you are in the place of destiny, to the
woman who loves you."

"Do you know, Walter, that, though I know
what you are saying is great nonsense," in-
terrupted Lavinia, "I cannot help liking you
for the deep, true feeling, you carry into every
thing. Still, even you only confirm me in my
creed; the warm emotion, the generous faith,
only place you in the power of others, and
power is what we all abuse. You, with your
kind heart, your lofty talents, are you happy?"

"O, you know I am not!" exclaimed Wal-
ter. "I feel that I shall never be what I
have powers to become: I cannot make the
future my home, as I used to do."

"A most unsubstantial one!" cried the ac-
tress: "give me the praise that rings upon the
ear; the applause that comes over the foot-
lights! But I am still hoarser with talking,
and here comes the tea; and, to console you
for my interruption, I will quote your own
lines:—

The fairer flowers are those which yield not fruit;
Our highest thoughts grow never into acts"

CHAPTER CIII.

A DISCOVERY.

It is a fearful trust, the trust of love.
In fear, not hope, should woman's heart receive
A guest so terrible. Ah! never more
Will the young spirit know its joyous hours
Of quiet hopes and innocent delights;
Its childhood is departed.

"THE more I see of the world," continued
Lavinia, sipping her bohea from a little china
cup, that might have served Titania, "the
more I am convinced that the principles with
which I set out in life are the only ones to get
on with. You ought to refer every thing to
yourself—be your own idol. If a lover ruins
himself for your amusement, you ask, what
better could he have done with his fortune?
If, by any odd chance, he was to do—what
they all talk of doing—die for your sake!

well, it is quite charming to be paid such an unusual compliment. It is curious to note, after all, that people take you very much on your own estimate! Modesty is only a proof of merit in 'Gay's Fables;' generally, it is taken as a tacit acknowledgement that you have nothing of which to be proud. My motto of '*je m'adore*,' is only what I expect!"

"Well, the exaggeration is pleasant enough," answered Maynard, smiling.

"It is truer than you like to admit. What makes Sir George Kingston—so false, so insolent, to others—a complete slave to my caprices? Only because I do not care for him! He knows I should only laugh at his desertion; and he would not like to be the one who was left, which he knows I should do for the first thwarted whim."

"And yet this man," muttered Walter, "can inspire deep and devoted attachments!"

"Not he! of all the letters in my possession, only one set convey to me the idea of real affection; and, odd enough, it is you who have inspired it! You know the correspondence you have been carrying on for Sir George."

"I do," said Walter, colouring; "and heartily am I ashamed of it! Now, I know him: I must and will put an end to it!"

"She says," continued Lavinia, "'but for your letters, I should never have known you; therefore, never have loved you as I do!'" but read for yourself," tossing one to him; "if Lady Marchmont's letters have touched even me, what effect will they take upon you?"

"Lady Marchmont!" cried Walter, in the most utter astonishment; "is it to Lady Marchmont that I have been writing?"

"To be sure it is!" replied the other: "did you not know it?"

"Sir George," said he, "never mentioned the name."

"It was sheer carelessness on his part, then," continued Lavinia, "for I am sure that he has no delicacy in the matter. I remember Lady Marchmont as if it were but yesterday—so beautiful, so proud! where would her pride be, if she could know that her letters were in my hands? And yet they might be in worse; for I, at least, pity her!"

"Good God!" exclaimed Walter, rising, and pacing the room, after reading a few passages from the letter he held in his hand, "never can I forgive myself! every regret she expresses cuts me to the heart!"

"You do, indeed, seem to take it to heart!" exclaimed the actress, an expression of jealous anger crossing her features; "why, it is quite a God-send for you! many a heart is caught in the rebound. Tell her you wrote the letters; explain Sir George's treachery; and, my life upon it, but you will

"Bear off the honours of the well-fought day!"

"And how," continued Walter, not attending to his companion—"how bitterly she reproaches herself! and to think that this earnest, this sorrowful love, has been a toy—an amusement—the result of such heartless

treachery! I never can tell her—but I ought—I must!"

"Why, it is the very thing that I am advising you to do," cried Lavinia: "the game is in your own hands!"

"How little," said he, still rather thinking aloud, than talking, "did I think, while writing these letters, proud of their composition, what misery I was inflicting on another, and storing up for myself!"

"And little did I think," muttered Lavinia, "that I could have been so mistaken. I have always fancied that it was Miss Churchill who inspired you with all these fine verses; instead of that, it was Lady Marchmont!"

And a bitter jealousy took possession of her mind. She had grown accustomed to look upon Ethel as Walter's passion and inspiration: it was something far off and distant, which even she felt was sacred; but Lady Marchmont was a new rival, and came too actual, and too near.

"I will tell you what, Lavinia," said Maynard, stopping short in his hurried walk, "you must give me those letters; and, painful as it is, I will at once take them to her, and make the disclosure!"

"Indeed I will do no such thing!" replied Lavinia, pettishly; "if Lady Marchmont likes to be made a fool of, what business is it of mine?"

Walter, who had been engrossed in his own thoughts, had not observed what was passing in his companion's mind, and stood amazed at what appeared to him such an unaccountable change.

"My dear Lavinia," exclaimed he, earnestly, "you wrong yourself; you are far too kind-hearted to have any satisfaction in the shame and misery to which keeping back those letters will inevitably expose Lady Marchmont!"

"What would she care for mine?" was the reply. "Besides, I really must look to myself: what will Sir George say?"

"Nothing to you," answered Maynard, "for I will take the whole upon myself!"

"It is of no use talking to me, for I will not do it!" cried Lavinia, passionately: "I see that you are in love with Lady Marchmont, and it is not me that you must expect to help you!"

A sudden light broke in upon Walter; and, for a moment, he felt awkward and embarrassed: but he was too deeply penetrated with the fault he had committed, too much touched with pity for its victim, to give up his point; besides, she had a claim upon him for her uncle's sake,—that uncle who had been his kindest and his first protector!

"I am quite tired," said the actress, rising, "and shall go to my own room. Good evening!"

"You shall not go," replied Walter, gently detaining her, "till your better self comes back; I thought you were above any such petty triumph over another!"

"You know I am not thinking of any such thing," answered she, sullenly: "but how

he goodness to tell me, why I should help you to make love to Lady Marchmont?"

"I am sure," cried Walter, "I want your help in nothing of the kind. I do not, I never could love Lady Marchmont: you know," added he, in a faltering voice, "that I love another!"

It was with bitter reluctance that he said this; he could not bear even an allusion to Ethel's name; but it was the penalty of his own conduct: he could not allow Lavinia's most unfounded jealousy to interfere with the only reparation in his power. The actress felt that he spoke the truth; and, ashamed of the reticence that she had displayed, now sought to bring the subject round a little.

"But why should you interfere in the matter? It will ruin you with Sir George!—you will lose your situation!"

"Do you think," cried Walter, "that I could keep it, after to-night? I would not, or twice his wealth, live with a man I so utterly scorn!"

"But you lose," said she, "his interest; and he has it in his power to do so much for you!"

"I could not submit to an obligation from Sir George Kingston!"

"I admit that you are right," replied Lavinia, slowly; "but I feel an unaccountable reluctance that you should interfere in this matter."

"Listen to me for a moment," said Walter, and seriously. Sir Jasper Meredith was my first and my best friend. If I possess the talents that have placed me in the very situation that I hold, I owe their cultivation to him. To what use have I turned them? to destroy the happiness of the being dearest to him upon earth! For his sake alone, I would lay down my life to restore those letters!"

"Poor, kind, old man that he was," said the actress, "how he would have grieved over this! Well, the grave often saves us a world of trouble!"

"I stand amazed now," continued Walter, "at my own recklessness in writing them; but I am so accustomed to invent an existence, that I forget the consequence in the interest of my composition. Ah, I see that there is no wickedness so desperate as deception: we can never foresee its consequences!"

"You shall have the letters," said Lavinia, beginning to put them together: "I shall tell Sir George that I sent them to their rightful owner in a fit of jealousy, and he will only beattered!"

"My dear Lavinia," said Walter, "I thank you most cordially; you know not the weight you have taken off my conscience; as to Sir George, I shall see him myself when I return from Lady Marchmont's."

So saying, he took the letters; and, again thanking her, hurried away.

"I do pity her!" exclaimed Lavinia, as she went slowly up-stairs; "the very humiliation of the letters being restored, is quite punishment enough, even for loving Sir George Kingston. It is the idol of her own fancy that he loves, not him!"

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CHAPTER CIV.

THE LETTERS RESTORED.

Alas! he brings me back my early years,
And seems to tell me what I should have been.
How have I wasted God's best gifts, and turn'd
Their use against myself! It is too late!
Remorse and shame are crushing me to earth,
And I am desperate with my misery!

A GOLDEN bribe won at least attention from the porter; and Walter knew that Lady Marchmont had returned, for her chair was being carried away from the door as he got up to it. Still the difficulty of obtaining admittance was great, and Maynard was vainly urging the importance of his business, when an old domestic, who had formerly lived with Sir Jasper Meredith, entered the hall. He knew Maynard at once; but he, too, demurred about the lateness of the hour.

"I know you love your mistress," said Walter, drawing the old man aside; "it is of vital consequence to herself that I should see her alone for a very few moments!"

The old man looked at him with a sort of startled surprise; but Walter was too pale and too agitated not to be in earnest.

"Come," said he, "to my room, I will take care that you see her ladyship."

Walter followed him into one of those small dark rooms, which so forcibly contrast the general magnificence of London, marking the social distinctions which exist under the same roof. The servant lighted a dull lamp, and left his visitor to a space that, to his impatience, seemed endless.

"I have been waiting," said the old man, "till I heard Lord Marchmont go down to supper: my lady is now alone in the dressing-closet. You see, Mr. Maynard, that I do not, for a moment, doubt but that your business justifies this unreasonable visit."

"It does, indeed!" exclaimed Walter, as he followed his guide.

"My lady is alone, for she has come in unusually early, so that Madame Cecile will not be returned these two hours, but I will wait in the antechamber."

They knocked at the door.

"Come in!" said a voice, strange and hollow.

"Madam," said the old man, "Mr. Walter Maynard says that he must see you for a moment on the most pressing business."

Lady Marchmont was still in the same attitude as when her husband left the room—half knelt, half crouched, on the floor. The mechanical restraint that we exercise over ourselves in the presence of our inferiors, made her start from her knee, and say, even calmly, "O, very well! show him in." But she did not know what she was saying; and when Walter, a moment after, entered, it took her quite by surprise. He had often seen her in public places, but she had never seen him since the last evening passed beside the little fountain; he seemed like the ghost of her youth, suddenly risen up to reproach her. Both stood silent, gazing on each other; Walter

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was actually lost in admiration of Lady Marchmont's transcendent beauty. The black velvet robe, with its strange embroidery, suited so well her superb figure, and threw into such strong relief the dead fairness of her neck and arms. Her face was without a vestige of colour, but it only showed more strongly the perfect outline of her features. Pale she was, but not like a statue; it was a human paleness—passionate and painful. Masses of her rich black hair fell over her shoulders, giving that wildness to the look which the dishevelled hair always does; but the glittering snake was yet wound round the head, and the ruby crest and diamond eye of the reptile had a strange likeness to life.

Lady Marchmont's eyes were unusually large; but to-night the face itself seemed half eyes, so dark and dilated were the shadowy pupils. But it was the expression of misery in her countenance, that riveted the attention; rarely before had so much anguish and beauty been combined in the same face. Some instinct told Walter that she was suffering, and he was come to add to it; still, the sooner what he had to say was said, the better, and he was the first to break silence.

"Lady Marchmont," said he, "will pardon an intrusion dictated by anxiety on her account. Will she permit me to place these letters in her own keeping?"

Henrietta looked at them with a bewildered air; she knew them at once, for they were only kept together by a riband. A terrible fear rushed across her mind; was Sir George ill?—was he engaged in a duel? The idea of some danger to him was the only one that presented itself.

"Did he—did Sir George Kingston," asked she, faintly, "send no message, when he sent these letters?"

"He did not send them!" replied her visitor.

A deep flush, for one moment, suffused her neck, arms, face—even to the very temples—as she exclaimed, "How did they come into your possession?"

"Lady Marchmont," returned Maynard, "do sit down, and listen patiently, if you can, to me for five minutes!"

Henrietta obeyed like a child, indeed she could now scarcely stand; still, there was that consciousness about her, which made her turn her face a little aside. Walter hesitated, when she turned suddenly round:—

"For mercy's sake, tell me the worst; I can bear it better than suspense! What has happened to Sir George Kingston?"

"Do not give yourself any uneasiness about one so utterly unworthy of a thought! Sir George Kingston is without one grain of either honour or real feeling! The fact is, I have, for some months past, been his secretary, and wrote for him the letters which were sent you!"

"You wrote them!" cried Henrietta.

"I had not the least idea to whom they were addressed. I wrote, as I do the pages of

a romance; and the Henrietta to whom they were addressed, was an ideal heroine!"

"Sir George did not write them himself!"

"He rarely read them, only just taking," replied the secretary, "a brief outline, lest he should betray himself in speaking!"

"My God!" murmured Henrietta, "how I have been deceived!"

"I do not ask, I dare not hope, for your forgiveness," continued Walter; "but let me atone, as far as I can, by warning you against Sir George Kingston: he gave these very letters of yours to amuse the idle hours of his mistress!"

Henrietta gasped for breath; but she swallowed down the hysterical emotion, and signed with her hand for Walter to go on.

"I have little more to say; your secret is safe. I will answer for the young actress's silence; it were an impertinence to assure you of my own!"

Henrietta gazed upon him steadfastly; his presence brought back the first, the sweetest dream of her life. Her love for Sir George Kingston seemed to vanish like a shadow; deep in her heart she felt that it was a poor fanciful emotion, born of vanity, and that craving for excitement, the inevitable result of her artificial state of existence. No; he whom she had really loved, stood there before her—pale, earnest—with the same dark and eloquent eyes, as when they used to kindle with light over the fine creations of the olden poets. Loving and beloved by him, how different would her destiny have been! An utter sense of desolation came over her; a terror of the future, an overwhelming agony in the present. That he, of all others, should be the one to witness her humiliation!

"I will trespass no longer," said Walter, after a moment's pause. "Let me hope that the bitterness of this moment will be forgotten in scorn. Good-night, dear Lady Marchmont. God bless you!" And he pressed the hand that she extended towards him.

He started at the touch, for it burned like fire; and, even in that momentary pressure, he could feel the pulses beat!

CHAPTER CV.

MIDNIGHT.

Where is the heart that has not bow'd
A slave, eternal Love, to thee?
Look on the cold, the gay, the proud,
And is there one among them free!

And what must love be in a heart
All passion's fiery depths concealing,
Which has in its minutest part
More than another's whole of feeling!

HENRIETTA pressed her temples on the cushion, but it did not still their tumultuous pain. The door closed after Walter Maynard, and it sank like a knell upon her ear. She listened to his receding footsteps, and when they died away, she still held her breath to listen; there was a deep silence, and she felt

utterly alone in the world. Strange how vividly her youth seemed to rise before her! she sat again beside her uncle, while Walter Maynard read aloud his boyish translation of the Prometheus bound; her uncle's words rang in her ear.

"So does destiny bind us on the rock of life, so does the vulture, Sorrow, prey on the core of every human heart!" Then she joined the little group that had gathered beside the fountain—so gay, so hopeful; what had they not, all of them, suffered since! She had witnessed the silent wasting of the heart which had banished the rose and the smile from the sweet face of Ethel Churchill; she knew that Norbourne Courtenaye was suffering all the bitterness of unavailing regret; and had she not just looked on Walter Maynard—pale, emaciated—with death in his face!

Slowly her thoughts reverted to herself; the blood rushed to her brow. What would she be to-morrow? the mark for obloquy and ridicule! disgraced, and for what? to minister to the wretched vanity of one whom she loathed even more than she scorned. She sprang to her feet; the crimson flood went back upon her heart; a strange light flashed from her eyes; her white lips were firmly compressed; and she clasped her hands so tightly, that the blood slightly tinged the ends of her fingers.

If ever an evil spirit be allowed to enter our frail human tenement, such spirit would have seemed to enter into Henrietta Marchmont. A strange tranquillity passed over her; she rose from her seat, and wrote a note; there was a key, which she took from the table, enclosed in it. After carefully sealing the parcel, she rang; and when the servant came in, she said,—

"Let this parcel, late as it is, be taken immediately—I forgot it; and you may tell Madame Cecile, that I am so tired, I shall not wait for her: she may go to bed without disturbing me. Is Lord Marchmont come up from supper yet?"

"No, my lady. To-night, M. Chloe tries the new receipt for stewed mushrooms, that Sir Robert Walpole's cook gave him, and they are only this moment serving up, for my lord was home sooner than he was expected."

"And he can sit down quietly to decide on the merits of stewed mushrooms," muttered Lady Marchmont, as the servant closed the door, "while I—but no matter, I hope he will enjoy his supper!"

Her eyes flashed, and she laughed aloud; but she started herself at the strange, harsh sound of her own laugh.

"Ah, here it is!" exclaimed she, unfastening a small key, which hung to the chain that she always wore; she then opened a small casket that stood where few would have noticed it; but, nevertheless, fastened for secu-

rity to its stand. From thence she took two small phials, each of a different shape, but each containing some clear liquid: one she hastily concealed in the folds of her dress; the other she kept in her hand: then, taking a lamp from the table, she left the room. Shading the light with the sleeve of her dress, she proceeded along the corridor, and, with a noiseless step, gained a large bed-room on the left. She listened for a moment, but all was quiet; and she glided in, pale and noiseless as a ghost.

It was Lord Marchmont's chamber, fitted up with all that luxury which marked how precious its master was in his own eyes at least. Within the purple hangings of the bed stood a table, where the night-lamp was already burning; and, also, a draught, carefully labelled.

Lord Marchmont was fond of small complaints, and his physician's ingenuity was often taxed to find a remedy where there was no disease.

Henrietta took the bottle, and swallowed part of the contents; and then filled it up from the phial she held in her hand—that hand never trembled. Again she withdrew, cautiously and quietly as she came; and returned to her own room undisturbed.

She had scarcely reached it before she heard her husband pass by, on his way to bed. She sprang to the door, and her heart beat loudly: he might yet come in, and relent in her favour. Not so; the heavy step passed heavily onward; and again she sank amid the cushions of the chair. There she sat, wan as a statue, and motionless, save when a quick convulsive shudder, as if of pain, ran through her frame.

It was awful to watch the change one single evening had wrought in that beautiful face. The eyes were hollow; the features thin, as if suddenly contracted; and her brow had a slight frown, knit either with suffering, or rigid determination.

A clock, striking two in the distance, startled her; and, rising, she approached the window. The dew had risen heavily on the plants in the balcony; and the moonlight turned the park below into one sheet of tremulous silver. All was silent as the grave, excepting that hollow murmur, which never, even in its stillest hour, quite forsakes a great city. The trees stood dark, and not a leaf stirred on the heavy branches; but amidst them rose the stately abbey, the Gothic architecture gleaming, "like ebony and ivory," in the clear radiance of the moon. There was not a cloud on the deep blue sky: but the countess did not look forth to gaze on the eternal beauty of the night; she saw nothing but the little garden immediately below the window of her room; and she muttered, in a hoarse whisper—"Will he come?"

CHAPTER CVI.

THE CHALLENGE.

'Tis a strange mystery, the power of words!
 Life is in them, and death. A word can send
 The crimson colour hurrying to the cheek,
 Hurrying with many meanings; or can turn
 The current cold and deadly to the heart.
 Anger and fear are in them; grief and joy
 Are on their sound; yet slight, impalpable:—
 A word is but a breath of passing air.

MAYNARD returned home direct from Lady Marchmont. To his surprise he learnt that Sir George was at home: such an early return was a very unusual thing with him. Walter was glad of it; he could not have borne to have passed the night without explanation; and hearing that Kingston was in the library, he at once hurried there, and found him, seemingly, alone and unoccupied.

"Maynard," exclaimed he, as his secretary entered, "do find something to say—I am dying of ennui."

"I have much to say," replied the other: "whether you may like to hear it, is another question."

The tone of his voice arrested Sir George's attention; a thing not easily done when the matter did not concern himself.

"Why," exclaimed he, "you look as pale as if you intended acting a tragedy instead of writing one! Where do you come from?"

"From Lady Marchmont, to whom I have restored all her letters," replied Maynard.

"Are you knave or fool, or both?" cried Sir George, starting from his seat. "What devil could tempt you to do any thing so absurd?"

"So right, you mean," replied Walter.

"And did you, as I suppose you did," asked Sir George, "make the most of your writing time for me?"

"I told her I wrote them every line."

"The devil you did!" exclaimed the other.

"And I told her, moreover, that if there was a man in the world devoid of one spark of honour, or one touch of feeling, that man was yourself."

"Mr. Maynard, this insolence is past bearing: leave the room this moment, meddling fool that you are!" cried Sir George, whose surprise had now become rage. "To-morrow you shall leave this house forever!"

"I shall not," replied the other, "wait your orders, or to-morrow either: I leave it forever to-night!"

"The sooner the better!" exclaimed Sir George, "impertinent and ungrateful as you are!"

"I am not aware," answered Walter, "that there is any impertinence in expressing my opinion of your most dishonourable conduct; and I am not aware that I owe you any gratitude: will you permit me to ask you on what account?"

"This is past bearing," interrupted Kingston; "will you, sir, leave the room?"

"Not, sir, till you tell me when you will give me satisfaction for having made me the tool of your heartless designs."

Sir George burst into a loud fit of contemptuous laughter.

"Why, do you mean that for a challenge? Really it is too good your supposing that I should meet you. I thank you; but, really, must beg to decline the honour."

"You dare not," replied Walter; "you would shrink from the shame of refusing to meet me!"

"The shame of refusing to meet you!—from the shame of meeting an equal I might," said Kingston, tauntingly; "but it is absurd to be challenged by my hired servant—a low-born nobody!"

Walter set his teeth. "You know that I am as much a gentleman as yourself!"

"In your own opinion," sneered the other.

"Really, it is very unpleasant to be interrupted in one's first sleep," said a young man, rising from the sofa where he had been lying; "what are you quarrelling about? I meant to have slept till supper. Come, let me be peacemaker."

"Never," said Walter; "but, perhaps, Lord Alfred, you will explain to Sir George, that his refusing to meet to-night will not tell to his credit to-morrow."

"Lord Alfred," replied Sir George, "will also have the goodness to state by whom the challenge was given—by my secretary, my hireling, my dependant."

"Not the last," interrupted Maynard; "I scorn you too much to depend upon you."

"Really," replied Sir George, "this farce grows tiresome. Mr. Maynard, I order you to leave the room."

"You have no right to order me. Give me the satisfaction to which I am so justly entitled, or I will force you to it."

"I defy you," replied the other, with a sneer.

"Liar and coward!" said Walter, striking him on the face.

"Mr. Maynard, you are too intemperate," cried Lord Alfred, snatching his arm; "what can justify such provocation?"

"Before I ring for my servants to show you to the door," said Sir George, "you will allow me to tell you, that I can only be insulted by my equal: I cannot go out with any but a gentleman!"

"I wonder," said Lord Alfred, interfering, "that you can dream of disputing Mr. Maynard's claim to be considered one. I can only say, so much do I value him, that let him satisfy me as to the quarrel, and I will attend him as second myself."

Walter gave him one eloquent look of gratitude, and Sir George turned livid with rage.

"But little explanation will suffice," said Maynard. "Sir George has, by he knows what false representations, induced me to write letters—loveletters for him. I believed that I only gave expression to real feeling—a feeling that I at once regretted and pitied. Instead of that, the passion which he feigned to me, as well as to its object, was a mere deceit, a matter of miserable and vain-glorious boasting. He could place the touching and

letters, full of the most confiding the bitterest self-reproaches, in the his mistress, to be tossed about for e eye! I have restored the letters o was the beloved child of my oldest st friend!"

ynard, I shall be happy to accom-
" said Lord Alfred. "Sir George,
d shall I communicate with?"
none: I will not," said Kingston,
"meet a moon-struck maniac!—a
-a low-born beggar!"

out the epithet," returned May-
d I am not ashamed of being the
George Kingston, my father served
s, and he was the superior officer.
-wound was received while defend-
end, Sir Edmund Kingston."

I must give you the lesson myself
ant you should have received from
its," replied Sir George, with an in-
gh. "There is no time like the
r these sort of things: Shelburne,"

a gentleman, who entered at that
"you must take a little exercise be-
r. Mr. Maynard has suddenly set
uire of dames. His romances have
o his head, and he needs bleeding;
ith me. The park is lonely enough
and we can return to supper."

CHAPTER CVII.

THE DUEL.

oonlight falleth lovely over earth;
range, indeed, must be the mind of man
an resist its beautiful reproach.
an hate work like fever in the soul
such entire tranquillity around?
ust be our nature to refuse
gentle intercession.

rden of Sir George Kingston com-
with the park; and through it the
emen passed, brushing the dew from
ng roses as they went. The night
larly lovely:

nd so beautiful was that fair night,
it have calm'd the gay amid their mirth,
ven the wretched a delight in tears;"

no soothing influence over human
ot an eye rested on the moon, whose
ual light has so little in common
world on which it looks.

stened to the low, soft music in the
ry leaf of which, instinct with sepa-
ony, was like a soft note on a mys-
re. None of the four spoke till they
a space open to the moonlight, but
red by the elms. There was little
being overlooked or interrupted.
was locked; there was no entrance
m the gardens of the houses; and
houses themselves they were at a
besides having the elms between

allow you to beg pardon even now,"
George, insolently.

Walter made no reply but by withdrawing his sword from the sheath; and in a few moments the seconds had placed them, and stood to see fair-play.

I can understand the feeling of the duellist when really fierce and bitter—there are injuries only to be washed out in blood; but I have always thought, that the seconds must, or ought, to feel very uncomfortable. They stand by in cold blood to watch the glittering steel, whose shimmer may every moment be quenched in blood. If the eye be dropped for an instant, the next it may look on death, and death in its most fearful shape—one human being dying by the rage, the evil passion, or the unforgivable fault of another.

The suspense in the present instance was of short duration. Maynard was no match for Sir George. The clicking of the swords smote on the silent night, the moonlight glanced from the blade ere it reached the dewy grass; but, ere a bird disturbed from its roost was out of sight in the air, Walter had fallen; and the grass, silvery with dew and moonlight, ran red with human blood.

"Will you beg my pardon?" said Sir George, setting his foot on the body of his prostrate enemy.

Walter could only look denial and defiance; and Sir George had raised his arm to plunge his sword again through the enemy at his feet, when a female figure darted from behind one of the trees, and arrested his arm.

The surprise gave Walter time to spring up; he did so, but staggered with weakness, and leant for support against one of the elms. Still Kingston called upon him to take up his sword; but Lord Alfred interfered.

"It would be murder in cold blood: I will not stand by and witness it. One of you, at all events, has had enough:" and he went to Maynard, who leant, pale and faint, with the blood slowly welling from his side. "It is not much, however," said the kind-hearted young nobleman, as he stanchd the wound with his handkerchief.

Lavinia, for she was the intruder, had watched the whole proceeding; her keen eye was for an instant softened with anxiety; but whatever might be the feelings which were passing through her mind, she showed no outward sign. If she was pale, it was hidden by her rouge; and her lip curled with its usual careless smile.

"And what the devil brought you here?" cried Sir George Kingston.

"What the devil brought you?" replied she, mimicking his manner.

"Well," said he, "I suppose I must excuse it, on account of the devotion it shows to myself."

"It shows no such thing," answered she, with the most provoking carelessness. "It was sheer curiosity brought me here—a few hints from actual life are always useful in my profession; and I wanted to see a real duel."

"I hope you are satisfied," said Sir George; "and now, I suppose, you will return with myself and Mr. Shelburne to supper."

"You are wrong in all your suppositions to-night," replied she: "I am going away at once; the coach is waiting for me now. I was coming down-stairs to get into it, when I saw you all hurrying off—I guessed the cause, and thought I might as well see you fight."

"Who has a coach waiting?" asked Alfred, this being the only part of the dialogue which had caught his attention. "Will they let it set down Mr. Maynard at the inn where he tells me he was to sleep?"

"O, certainly," replied the actress, "provided he will promise not to die on the way."

"Madam!" exclaimed Sir George, almost breathless with anger, "I insist upon knowing the cause of your extraordinary conduct!"

"Extraordinary, do you call it?" returned she, with a look of comic surprise; "there is nothing extraordinary in any one's getting tired of you; and I am very tired indeed."

"Impertinent fool!" muttered Kingston, between his clenched teeth, feeling the more enraged because he saw Shelburne could scarcely repress his laughing.

"Lord, Sir George!" continued she, taking an air of arch simplicity, and looking very pretty, "one would think no one had ever tired of you before; and yet you must have found it a very common occurrence. You are neither amusing nor interesting: how can you wonder that women find you very tiresome?"

Lavinia knew the object of her sarcasm well—

—"She was wreaking
More revenge in bitter speaking"

than any thing else could have done. A woman's tears would have been to him a triumph; her reproaches would, at the very worst, only have bored him; but a sneer touched Achilles on the heel. He shrank from being ridiculed; he knew he had no ready wit to turn it.

"Do let us go home," exclaimed he, turning emphatically to his companion.

"It is so late that I must wish you 'good night!'" replied Mr. Shelburne, who, late as it was, secretly did not despair of finding some one to whom he could tell the adventure in which he had so suddenly found himself engaged. Why, it was worth while sitting up all night, if it were only to narrate Sir George's unceremonious dismissal by the pretty actress.

"Surely," said Lavinia, extending her hand, "you have too much gallantry, Mr. Shelburne, not to put me into the coach."

Lord Alfred and Maynard were already nearly out of sight; of course, Mr. Shelburne could only take the hand offered, and not sorry so to do, as he hoped to hear a little more.

"O," said Sir George, "I see that I am to congratulate Mr. Shelburne on being my successor."

"No such thing," replied Lavinia; "I never allow my peace of mind to run any risk, which it would do with Mr. Shelburne after yourself—the contrast would be too dangerous."

CHAPTER CVIII.

THE ASSIGNATION.

God, in thy mercy, keep us with thy hand
Dark are the thoughts that arise within the heart,
When evil passions rise like sudden storms,
Fearful and fierce! Let us not act those thoughts;
Leave not our course to our unguided will.
Left to ourselves, all crime is possible,
And those who seem'd the most removed from guilt,
Have sunk the deepest!

SIR GEORGE bore the annoyances of the night as a very vain man does totally unaccustomed to mortification. He was frantic with passion; he longed to kill somebody, but he did not know who. He took a common resource in such cases—he stormed at his servants; but, on entering the house, consolation awaited him. A parcel was placed in his hands, which had been left with most particular directions that it should be given to him immediately. He was half-inclined, from pettish obstinacy not to open it; but curiosity pervaded: and curiosity, like virtue, was its own reward.

It contained a key, and a note from Lady Marchmont, entreating him to forgive what she called her petulance that evening at the *fête*; and bidding him come to tell her that she was still loved. He was to enter through the little garden gate, and, ascending by the balcony steps, would, in five moments, reach the dressing-room, where he would find her alone.

There was a postscript—"By-the-by, a secretary of yours has made a great merit of giving me the letters I wrote to you: of course he stole them: we must concert some means of securing his silence."

"So I owe her submission half to fear—a useful lesson as regards women in future. I believe there is nothing like making them afraid of you; but," continued he, his handsome face darkening with every evil passion, "it adds to my triumph to think that I owe it to the very means that fool took to prevent it! I will take care that he knows it."

Sir George could understand no other motive for Maynard's conduct than his liking Lady Marchmont himself—a higher or more generous cause never even suggested itself.

"I must attend to my toilet a little; but, no," added he, "the very carelessness will be a proof of haste; and, now I think of it, I am very late:" so saying, he threw his cloak round him, and hurried across the park.

Lady Marchmont had passed another hour of miserable suspense. The moonlight was waxing cold and faint, and the chill air of the morning began to rustle among the trees; and the mist, which rose from the dewy grass, spread like a thin veil, rendering all distant objects confused. A streak of wan and sickly light began to glimmer in the east; and again Lady Marchmont clenched her hands together, and asked—"Will he come?"

The cold wind lifted her long hair from her neck; but she felt it not. Suddenly she

tarted; she pressed her hands to her burning eyelids to clear their sight: but—no; she was not deceived: a figure, as yet indistinct as a shadow, was hurrying across the park. "The colour deepened on her cheek, the light flashed from her eyes; but neither colour nor light were such as are wont to welcome the expected lover's arrival.

"He must not find me waiting on the balcony," whispered she, with a mechanical consciousness of feminine pride; "yet, what does it matter?" added she, with a bitter laugh.

However, she again resumed her seat in the arm-chair, and busied herself about a lamp, over which some coffee was boiling. She looked very different now to what she had once while seated on that very chair when Maynard came.

She had taken off her velvet robe, and was carelessly wrapped in a white silk nightgown, fastened with violet ribands. It was as if she had worn in half-mourning, and had all the coquettish elegance of *demie parure*. The serpent was unbound from her hair, which was partly gathered up with a violet band—part left loose on her shoulders, as if she had stopped in the middle of her graceful walk. She was pale no longer, her cheeks warmed with the clear feverish red of the pomegranate, and gave that peculiar light to her eyes, which is only given by the contrast of the crimson. Deep as it was, it grew yet deeper; for Sir George Kingstons entered the room.

"Thus, let me thank you! thus, pour out my happiness!" exclaimed he, throwing himself at her feet.

She averted her face, but that was only natural timidity.

"Ah!" cried she, suddenly, "your cloak is quite wet with morning dew: you are a laggard, Sir George!"

"I have not had your note half an hour," replied he: "I flew to you the moment I received it."

"I fancy," said she, with a smile, "that we are both a little tired: you must have a cup of coffee with me before we begin to talk."

Sir George saw that she was embarrassed, and secretly enjoyed it.

"You will not let me pour out the coffee," said she, withdrawing her hand; "there, tell me if my picture is like me."

He rose, and the instant his back turned, she emptied into his cup the contents of a little phial, that she took, with the rapidity of thought, from the folds of her dress.

"I cannot look at a picture," exclaimed he, "while I can gaze on the original."

"Well," replied she, "your coffee is now ready."

He took the cup and drank it down—glad of it; for having to play the part of an ardent lover, he felt more sleepy than was quite suitable to the character. The coffee revived him; and snatching Lady Marchmont's beautiful hand, he pressed it to his lips. "How can

I ever," whispered he, drawing nearer toward her, "ever thank you enough?"

"I do not know," said Henrietta, starting from her seat, and drawing herself to her full height, "that you have much to thank me for; but, follow me softly."

She took the lamp, and led the way through a suite of apartments, till she stopped in a large bed-room, dimly lighted by a night-lamp, and the one she carried.

"This is the third time that I have been here to-night," muttered she; and, hastily withdrawing the heavy curtain, exclaimed—"Look there!"

Sir George did look, and saw the face of Lord Marchmont; and saw too that it was the face of a corpse.

"I cannot stay here," continued she, in the same hollow whisper, and led the way back again to the dressing-room.

Sir George followed her mechanically; one look at the bed of death was enough; the pale, rigid countenance, startled him like a spectre.

"I would not have come," was the first thought that rose in his mind, "if I had had the least idea of such a scene. How unlucky Lord Marchmont should have died to-night!"

The countess led the way through the noiseless rooms with a step so cautious, that it did not waken the slightest echo, and her companion was as careful as herself. They regained the apartment without interruption; and, after closing the door quietly, Lady Marchmont set the lamp down on the table. Its faint gleam, almost quenched by the daylight, fell upon her face, and her companion started at its strange and fearful expression!

"Lord Marchmont," said Henrietta, "overheard our conversation this evening. Tomorrow he would have denounced and degraded me; to-night he has died, and by my hand!"

Sir George made an involuntary step nearer to the window—the selfish ever the predominant feeling.

"You cannot suppose," exclaimed he, "that I would marry his widow! his murderer!"

Henrietta gazed upon him, with the fire flashing from her large black eyes.

"And what do you suppose I sent to you for?"

Sir George stood silent, and she rapidly continued:—

"I sent for you that I might know the sweetness of revenge; that I might tell you how I scorned, how I loathed you! Do you think that I am not perfectly aware of the mean treachery of your conduct?"

"Maynard is"—faltered Sir George Kingstons.

"What you are not—a person in whom belief may be placed. Now I understand the contrast between yourself and your letters. But it is of no use talking now; the servants will soon be stirring, and it would be rather awkward to be found here."

"For you, perhaps, madam," sneered Sir George.

"Rather for yourself," replied she, with the greatest composure; "you might be implicated in the charge of murder."

Sir George hastily approached the balcony; and Lady Marchmont said, "while in her eye the gladiator broke," so fierce even was the expression of her beautiful face,—"I do not think that Sir George Kingston will boast to-morrow of his interview with me to-night."

He hurried down the steps, and a wild hysterical laugh rang after him. There was something in the sound that startled even the careless and hardened Sir George Kingston. Still, before he got half way across the park, vanity again floated on the surface.

"What a pity," muttered he, "that I shall not be able to tell to-night's *tête-à-tête*! She has taken good care to prevent it."

She had taken more care than he suspected. Even while he spoke a fiery pain darted, like a bird of prey, on his heart; he gasped for breath; and when the agony was over, felt utterly exhausted. He staggered for support against a tree near. By a strange coincidence, it was the very one against which Walter Maynard had leant not above an hour or so before. The blood was yet red on the grass; and Sir George Kingston felt a sickness seize upon him as he caught sight of it.

Again his whole frame was wrung with convulsive pain; this time the spasm was instantly followed by another. He strove to call for aid; and he heard his voice die away on the silent night. He was alone—helpless; a few acres of green grass made a solitude, vast as a desert, around him. Every moment he grew more incapable of moving; yet he knew he might cry aloud for assistance in vain. He gazed around—strange shapes seemed to flit by, then grow into gigantic shadows; a sound of rushing waters was in his ears, and he gasped with a burning thirst.

Suddenly a terrible fear flashed across him, and as it flashed, he felt that it was the truth. The cup of coffee that he had drank at Lady Marchmont's, had she drugged that too? Lord Marchmont's white, rigid face seemed to be painted distinctly on the air; and then endowed with a strange consciousness, opened its dull eyes; and Sir George felt that his doom was sealed in that look. The suffering grew more acute; his knees failed under him, and he sank heavily on the ground.

Still, life was strong within him; he struggled with his agony; he thought if he could but reach home he might have aid, and live; but, even while he struggled, there was that within which told him his struggles were vain. He was growing delirious with the internal torture, with the intolerable burning thirst; yet his delirium turned upon real objects; the pleasures of existence crowded upon his imagination—he saw his youth, as it were, distinct before him; he thought of his wealth, it could not now buy him even a cup of cold water; then beautiful forms, but all with fiendish eyes, gathered round him: some offered him golden fruits; others, purple wine:

he stretched his parched mouth towards them, and they melted into the wan air with a mocking laugh.

Consciousness returned again; he saw the first red of the morning beginning to colour the clouds; a sort of stupid wonder passed through him, that he had never thought them so lovely before. He strove to keep his heavy eyelids open, to fix them on the blue sky; he felt that if once they closed, never would they open again.

At that moment, a bird fluttered from the bough overhead, and sprang, with a song, into the air. A gleam of sunshine broke forth, as if to light its early path. Sir George moaned aloud in envy; he would have been thankful to be that poor bird. That song was the signal for a thousand others; every bough grew in a moment alive; the sunshine became more golden, and a rich purple flushed deepening every instant in the east.

Again a fierce spasm shook Sir George's now weakened frame; it forced from him a womanish shriek; he was glad to hear it: a wild hope came, that it might bring some chance wanderer to his help; and, in that hope, he filled the air with frantic cries.

He cried in vain; he was dying in the midst of that crowded city, helpless, and alone. O, for a human face to have bent over his own! He ceased his shrieks suddenly; he found that he exhausted his strength; the morning had now broken, and if he could but live a little longer, some one must pass; and, so strong was the craving for humanity, that it was as if, let any one come near, and he must be saved. But the cold dews rose heavily on his forehead, a feeling of suffocation was in his throat, while his eyes swam, and the objects near began to whirl round with frightful velocity.

He raised his hand to clear the mists from his sight, but his strength failed in the effort, and his hand dropped heavily to the ground with a noise that, to his own ear, sounded like thunder! Painfully, he forced his heavy eyelids to unclose, and his distended orbs sought for some object whereon to fix; they met the patch of grass, yet red with the blood of Walter Maynard. It seemed to rise in judgment against him; he could not take his eyes away from the guilty colour which began to spread; it rose, colouring the heavens with its fearful hue, till the very azure was dyed with scarlet. Then it grew dark; a darkness filled with shadows—shadows from other years.

Every evil thought that had ever arisen within him, now assumed some palpable form. Pale faces looked upon him with sad reproaches; wasted hours, misused gifts, stood around like spectres. For the first time in his indulged and evil life, he thought of judgment, and of an hereafter. He remembered his God, but only to fear him. He started! that awful terror mastered even the extremity of pain; the drops poured down his face; his eyes glared fearfully round, seeking shelter, and finding none. The effort was too much, he

one last cry of despair, and in died!

ng gayly overhead; the morn-
p even the tears that night had
a. The clouds first reddened,
red, white and pure, over the
e from the wilderness of streets
other day came, busy and anx-
ing humanity. The cheerful-
ning brought its own glad tone
the early walkers in the park.
stered were going on their way
ten the singing voice suddenly
ry of horror, for the dead lay
His eyes, wild and staring—
no friendly hand to close them;
nveloped with fearful agony.
gston was stretched a corpse!
the luxurious, the flattered—
common pathway like a dog!

CHAPTER CIX.

CHAMBER OF DEATH.

Is to see the deck
Of some noble wreck
To see the marble stone
And with gray moss o'ergrown;
To see the broken lute
To its music mute.
The lute, or fallen tower,
Sink in its proudest hour,
And majesty combined
With shape—the soul's mind."

air waved to and fro the chintz
ge, and, for a London one, a
oking room, whose windows
hames. It was high-tide, and
ned freighted with a separate
sils of the small boats, as they
along, shone with the purest
e that rowed past, flung up a
ring sparkles at every stroke
the sill of each window were
ll of roses; and their sweet
to the room.

n-chair, so placed as to com-
g that went by, the view only
aving leaves of the rose trees,
sill. On one side was an em-
which, from the delicate finish
indicated that younger eyes
ed the old lady. On the other
e, with an exquisite breakfast-
ten china, from which she was
olate. Placed opposite, on a
er granddaughter, a huge book
knee, from which she was

Perhaps there was a charm
vice, which gave its own un-
ation to the long-drawn pages;
also, the still stronger charm

ll liked the interminable laby-
ryrus and the Cassandra, be-
liked them in the days of her
th identifies itself with the
he heroic knight, or the lovely
it reads; it lives amid those

fine creations; its sweetest hours are given to
dreams which soon

"Fade into the light of common day."

It would have seemed ludicrous to a com-
mon observer to mark the aged woman listen-
ing by the hour to these high-flown gallantries;
but it was not them that she heard, it was the
remembrances that they brought. The old
live more with memory than the young.
Every page in that ponderous tome had some
association with life's brightest hours: she
lived them over again, while the murmur of
that fair girl's soft tones fell sweet upon her
ear. Ethel's graceful figure, seated at her
grandmother's feet, completed the picture; and
any one who had looked casually into that
cool and cheerful chamber, would have thought
it a very shrine of household happiness. And
Ethel, if not happy, was calm—almost content;
every day brought its duties, sweetened by
affection; and, in her grandmother's comfort
she found her own.

Mrs. Churchill had given up urging Ethel
into a round of gayety, which suited neither
her health nor her spirits. She could not but
feel the tender care that watched her least
look, yet was always as submissive as it was
anxious. She had been a long time in dis-
covering that Ethel was no longer a child;
but she now softened down a thousand prej-
udices by daily counsel with one who was a gen-
tle and intelligent companion. Ethel resolutely
turned her thoughts from the past; and, if she
could not look to the future, at least she forced
them to occupy themselves with the present.
The bitterness of a first great despair had
passed; but the traces would linger, despite
every effort. Her step was no longer buoyant,
and her laugh was no longer heard rising sud-
denly, like the notes of a bird; she had a look
of weariness, when she tried any of her old
amusements. Unless at her grandmother's
request, she never went near the spinet; she
nursed no flowers for her own room; and
when she read, it was slowly; she could not
keep her attention to the page. You gazed
on her, and saw

"'Twas a pale face that seem'd undoubtedly
As if a blooming face it ought to be!"

But the bloom and the gayety had gone to-
gether: there was sweetness and endurance;
but they are sad, when the only expression
worn by youth.

She was just pausing for breath after a longer
speech, even than usual, of the heroine's,
when the door opened, and Madame Cecile,
Lady Marchmont's maid, rushed into the
room!

"O, my lady!" exclaimed she; "for pity's
sake come to her, Miss Churchill!" and, sink-
ing into a chair, gave way to a violent burst
of hysterics.

It was long before Ethel's soothing or ques-
tions could extract any thing like an answer,
till Mrs. Churchill took the matter into her
own hands, and tried the effect of a little je-
dicious scolding. The effect was most salu-

tary; and, amid starts and screams—for the poor girl was fairly frightened out of the small portion of sense that, at any time, belonged to her—they learned that Lord Marchmont had been found dead in his bed; and that Lady Marchmont was, with the shock, in a state of almost insanity!

"We can do nothing with her! she won't even let me put up her hair under a cap!" said Madame Cecile.

Ethel wrung her hands in dismay; but instantly recovering, exclaimed, "O, let me go to her at once! may I not, dear madam?"

Mrs. Churchill gave consent without hesitation; and a chair being sent for immediately, Ethel hurried as fast as she could to Marchmont House. All was in that confusion which follows any sudden calamity: the servants were hurrying in all directions, apparently for no other purpose than that of getting in each other's way. As she went up stairs, a succession of frightful screams made her hurry breathlessly to the room from whence they came. It was Lady Marchmont's dressing-room; and there she found her surrounded by physicians, two of whom held her, while the surgeon made a vain attempt to bleed her: it was impossible in her present state.

Ethel stood—pity, anxiety—alike merged in astonishment at the change which a single night had wrought. Henrietta's long hair flowed unbound, but it was white as the shoulders over which it swept. Age and youth seemed to have met together: there was the skin, fair and smooth, but the mouth was fallen, and the features thin and contracted. The large black eyes seemed to have gone back into the head, and a dark hollow circle was round them; while the change in the colour of the hair, once so glossily black, now turned to silver, gave her countenance something that seemed to Ethel almost supernatural. As soon as Henrietta saw her, with a sudden spring she released herself from restraint; and, flinging her arms round her friend, though it was obvious she did not know her, exclaimed,—

"Ah! you look gentle, I will go with you; save me from these horrible men, who want to drag me to prison!"

But while speaking, her hands relaxed their passionate clinging; the wild black eyes closed heavily, and she sank fainting on the floor!

"It is a merciful insensibility," said the eldest physician; "but, if she revive, I fear the awakening—it will be terrible!"

"I will watch by her," cried Ethel; and, for many, many long and dreadful nights did she watch by her bedside: even to herself she would not guess what might be the import of those frightful ravings!

Fearful were the lessons that the young and gentle Ethel learnt in the house of mourning. She saw Lord Marchmont borne away to his grave, unfollowed by a single regret, and forgotten as soon as the coffin was closed. The selfish man left behind him neither sorrow nor affection; he was summoned away, and his

place knew him no more. But the b of Lady Marchmont had a darker lesson the grave, the ravings of insanity reveal fiery world of that beating and panting heart. Ethel could only feel too fearfully humbled, for judgment; but she wept while she prayed, beside her early friend

CHAPTER CX.

POVERTY.

It is an awful thing how we forget
The sacred ties that bind us each to each.
Our pleasures might admonish us, and say,
Tremble at that delight which is unshared;
Its selfishness must be its punishment.
All have their sorrows, and how strange it is
They do not soften more the general heart:
Sorrows should be these universal links
That draw all life together.

"It is of no use asking me to stay Lavinia to the manager: 'you know never do any thing but what I choose!'

"You need not tell me that," interrupted the other; "but, if you had any sense, you would choose to do what I ask. I have misused the Duke of Bolton that you should with us to-night."

"I would not come," replied the other; "if it were only to teach you not to promise for me; but I cannot waste more time talking to you!"

"His grace will go frantic with discomfiture!" continued the manager; "the ballad of yours completely turned his head. Indeed, if you would but play your part properly, there is no saying what might happen!"

"Well," cried she, "since you have a brilliant idea of my future prospects, you will, on the strength of the advance me another week's salary!"

"Indeed I will not!" replied the manager; "you are already more in advance than I ever before allowed any of my comedians to be; and, as to your prospects, why are you throwing them away?"

"Well, well, it does not matter, it won't keep you from supper. You are the duke, that we value things in proportion to the trouble that they give us, and the reason why I always give as much as I can!"

So saying, she hurried off; but it shone in her eyes, and her hand trembled as she drew her cloak round her. She was in the dimly lighted streets, made more dreary by a small heavy rain that was falling full of strange contrasts; and she could have seen—wearily, yet walking as she could, for she had a long way to go, for of late she had debarred common necessities; cold, for the rain pierced her thin cloak—who would have believed that she was the brilliant actress not an hour since, was the gaze of the whole house rang with applause!

"Ah, there is still light!" muttered she, she stopped before a shop, whose shutters were, however, closed, but through which she saw the glimmer from within. She paused a moment on the threshold, as if reluctant to enter.

"The only memorial I shall soon have of him—his gift!" said she, in a low sad whisper; and then, with the haste of one who makes a sudden resolution, with which they are almost afraid to trust themselves, she rushed loudly at the door. There was a moment's silence, then whispering within, and a voice asked—

"Who's there?"

"O!" replied Lavinia, "you know me very well; let me in, I have a locket you must take to-night, or you shall not have it to-morrow!"

It was a locket that Walter Maynard had shown her immediately after her appearance in his comedy; one of the incidents turned on a locket, and she had made, what is dramatically called, a hit in the scene. As every step approached the door; a sound was heard, as of a falling chain; then bolt after bolt was withdrawn, and at last the actress was admitted, and the door was instantly closed after her. It was a pawnbroker's shop, that last receptacle of human wretchedness—wretchedness that takes the most sordid and degrading form; over the door might be written Dante's "*Lasciate Speranza*," for, truly, hope never enters there.

The various articles exhibited in the windows during the day, had been removed for winter security, and there only remained a shank. But the glass cases on the counter all sent forth a sort of dull glitter; they were filled with various ornaments, some dirty, though mostly tarnished by time, but still telling some little history of a happier era. Still this was the least oppressive part of the establishment; ornaments, even though hallowed by affection, are vanities; but, though even vanity be reluctantly parted with, it is but a brief pang. I believe there is not a woman in the world that would hesitate to part with the most costly toy in her possession, to save but an annoyance from the street she loved: but there were, collected together, evidence of far heavier sacrifices. There were cords passed along the ceiling, from whence hung articles of wearing apparel the most common description, things that make of every day use, and there was one whole line of little children's frocks; moreover, in one corner appeared, piled up, a large heap of blankets.

There is something fearfully wrong in what we call our highly civilized state of society, when poverty can be permitted to take the most ugly shapes of suffering that it does. It is enough, if we did but think, to make the heart sick, when we know the misery, the social misery, which surrounds us in this vast city; and we might tremble to consider how much might be prevented—prevented both by individual and by general exertion. We are

seated, perhaps leaning, in an easy chair, our feet on the fender, doing nothing or some light work, which is only an amusement; our meals have gratified not only hunger, but taste; we are under the pressure of not one single want; and yet, within an hundred yards from our door, there is a wretch dying of cold and hunger!

No one can deny the wide and ready benevolence which prevails in our country; but while the misery exists, that no one can deny does exist, there must be some want of either will or judgment. Too many people confound charity with donation; they are satisfied with having given the most ready vent to the generous impulse; they have gratified at once a high and a low feeling—the kindness, and, I fear, also the ostentation. That is not charity which goes about with a white pocket handkerchief in the hand, and is followed by a flourish of trumpets! No, charity is a calm, severe duty; it must be intellectual, to be advantageous. It is a strange mistake that it should ever be considered a merit; its fulfilment is only what we owe to each other, and is a debt never paid to its full extent.

It is a most difficult art to give; for if, in giving, we also give the habit of dependence, our gift has been that of an evil spirit, which always proves fatal. What we should seek to give are, habits, not only of industry, but of prudence: to look forward, is the first great lesson of human improvement. In the assistance hitherto offered to those in need, the self-respect of the obliged has been too much forgotten: we have degraded, where we should have encouraged. The remedy lies with time, and with knowledge; but there must be much to redress in the social system, which has luxury at one extreme, and starvation at the other.

Lavinia approached the counter with her usual careless air; and, laying down the locket, named its price. There were two men in the shop—brothers, from their obvious likeness—sallow, with sharp features, to which no possible change could bring any other expression than a sort of dull cunning. The eyes were small, and of a dead filmy black; they said nothing, even when fixed upon you. One of the brothers never moved from the high desk at which he was seated. He gave one cautious glance at the visitor; and, after that, never looked from his paper. The other took the locket, examined it carefully, and laid it down, saying, in a voice that closely resembled the hissing of a snake—

"You ask too much!"

"Nay," replied the actress, "it is worth far more!"

"We may keep it by us," replied the pawnbroker, "for months; there is no demand for such articles."

"But," exclaimed she, eagerly, "I shall soon redeem it!"

"So you all say," returned the man, with imperturbable coolness.

"Ah!" cried Lavinia, "I will answer for redeeming it in a month!"

"We hear the same story every day," was the answer.

"But I shall have plenty of money in a few weeks!" interrupted Lavinia.

"Then you will not care for your old ornaments: you will go and buy new!" replied the man.

The actress laughed out, with something of the recklessness that was part of her nature. The man looked up in dismay from his desk, the one behind the counter opened his small black eyes with a gaze of stupid wonder—laughter was there such an unfamiliar sound.

"Well," continued she, "there is a good deal of truth in what you say; so, what will you give me?"

The man named about a tithe of the value of the article; her countenance fell as she said, in a hollow whisper, "I suppose I must take it!"

The pawnbroker took the locket, carefully put it aside, slowly counted out the money, still more slowly filled up the small printed ticket, and then passed money and card into Lavinia's hand, to whose impatient temper the delay had seemed interminable. She hurried off, and the door was closed; and, bolt after bolt, drawn after her. The rain poured in torrents, and she was wet through before she arrived at the door of the small inn in the city, which was her destination.

"I must dry myself," said she, approaching the kitchen fire, "before I go into his room."

She took off her cloak, wrung the rain from her long and dripping hair; and, while doing so, caught sight of herself in the small piece of glass which, put like a slate into a wooden frame, hung on a nail.

"I have forgotten to wipe off my rouge," muttered she; "a pretty figure I look, with these red streaks!" she took her handkerchief and removed the stains, then you saw that the cheek was pale and hollow. She stood before the fire for some time, though every gesture betrayed her impatience. When the landlady came in, she called her, and placed in her hands a small sum of money. "This is last week's bill!"

The woman half hesitated to take it, but she was very poor herself; as she took it she said, with great kindness, "I have been sitting with him, but he is very bad to-night!"

Lavinia started! "I am quite dry, the damp can do him no harm now;" so saying, she hurried up the narrow staircase to a small room, where, on a wretched bed, lay Walter Maynard!

There was the end of all his glorious fancies—of all his lofty aspirations. The poetry, which had so often made real life seem like a dream, had now reached its last dark close. Never more would the voice of the charmer, Hope, reach his ear, charm she never so wisely. Poor, neglected, and broken-hearted Walter Maynard was dying.

CHAPTER CXI.

THE USUAL DESTINY OF THE IMAGINATIVE

Remembrance makes the poet: 'tis the past
Lingering within him, with a keener sense
Than is upon the thoughts of common men.
Of what has been, that fills the actual world
With unreal likenesses of lovely shapes
That were, and are not; and the fairer they,
The more their contrast with existing things;
The more his power, the greater is his grief.
Are we then fallen from some noble star,
Whose consciousness is an unknown cause;
And we feel capable of happiness
Only to know it is not of our sphere.

THE first sickly gleam of daylight came through the uncurtained window, dead as the dull yellow glare of the candle that, long burned through the night, was fast dim in the socket. The chill and uncomfortable light showed the full wretchedness of scene over which it fell; the walls were whitewashed, the whiteness long since scoured by dust and smoke, and broken in many places. The bare boards looked as if they had not been scoured for months; a deal table, and two rickety chairs, was the furniture, except the miserable pallet which Walter Maynard lay dying; and was the end of his impassioned hopes, as his early and glorious dreams!

The change that a few weeks had wrought in him was awful: the features were all transparent, and with a strange beauty, like spirit's; and yet with that look which longs to death, and death only. He awoke, feverish, and restless; and the shining eyes had that sort of fixed brilliancy which life, even in its brightest moments never gave. The door opened so softly, even he did not hear it. Lavinia looked and, seeing that he was already roused, entered with his coffee; it was the only one for which he retained the slightest liking; perhaps there was some lingering association with the pursuits once so precious; the long midnight, when he had been accustomed to drink it.

"How have you slept?" said she.

Walter smiled faintly, but his reply interrupted by coughing; he signed to the window, which she opened, and then he hastily away, for she could not bear the sight of the churchyard below. Maynard was in the same house where he had come on chance on his first arrival in London; he now occupying the room above the way where he then slept. Remembering it so cheap, out-of-the-way place, he had so withered the day after the duel to die, unknown for and unknown. But Lavinia had found him out; and, for weeks, had been his devoted nurse, though even she was started at extreme destitution of their situation; but, for his sake only, not for her own.

"O, Walter!" exclaimed she, after a long silence, during which she had either watched his difficult breathing, or turned aside to dry away the tears that, in spite of herself, would fill her eyes. There is an awe about the

the face the most familiar to us; it taken its likeness from the here-
 readful and so dark. "I cannot
 see you perishing thus; you have
 died, do let me apply to them?"
 she answered Walter, bitterly, "I
 ends. While I could work for them,
 hem, they were glad enough to flat-
 tress me; now that I am broken in
 spirits, that my soul has worn itself
 in service, who of all that have owed
 theirs to my pages will care that the
 book wrote now lies languid, scarcely
 its own name!"

"I talk thus," said she.
 "not?" interrupted Walter, "it is the
 pathos, I despise my kind; I grieve
 because that I have wasted on them.
 I regret every generous hope, every
 emotion, did I not think they must rise
 in mockery against them."

He looked bewildered; she could as-
 tound this outburst of impassioned
 he understood his former bursts of
 enthusiasm. She knew nothing of
 the inextricable from an imagina-
 tion; feeling every thing with
 the susceptibility, and exaggerating
 it. The excitement of even those
 was too much, he sank back, faint-
 on the pillow. It soon, however, passed
 he roused again.

"I exclaimed he, hastily, "there
 people sent into the world to be mi-
 serably do they fulfil their
 duty see one eager, hopeful, and be-
 hold the suffering of his kind
 reward—over whom even the words
 him he despises have influence—be-
 lieve that you see one predestined to the
 wretchedness."

"I returned Lavinia, not know-
 ing what to say, "it is never worth
 anything much about other people."

"Wretched," continued Walter, "has
 been! I look back upon my
 loved childhood, when I felt the
 cold word with a sorrow beyond

Then came a youth of incessant
 labour whose exhaustion none can tell
 engaged in it. How often has the
 from my hand for very weariness,
 characters swam before my aching
 how often have I written when heart-
 ing my imagination, till the reaction
 left!"

"But Walter, do not talk, you are not
 ," interrupted his companion.

"It does me good. I cannot bear,"

"to be here thinking over thoughts
 of my very life away. Alas! how I
 regret all that was yet stored in my mind!

Now, Lavinia," continued he, with
 earnestness of a slight delirium, "I am
 more than I was; I have felt, have
 much! Talk of the mind exhaust-
 —never! Think of the mass of
 which every day accumulates! Then
 , with its calm, clear light, corrects

so many youthful fallacies; every day we feel
 our higher moral responsibility, and our greater
 power. What beautiful creations even now
 rush over me!—but, no, no!—I am dying!—
 I shall write no more!" and his voice sunk,
 as he gasped for breath: "and she," murmured
 he, after a long pause, "whom I have so idol-
 ized—a thousand hearts beat at the tender
 sorrow of which she was the inspiration! yet
 she will never know how utterly she has been
 beloved. Even now her sweet face swims
 before me; methinks that I would give worlds
 to gaze upon it once again; to carry the image
 into eternity with me!"

A peculiar expression crossed Lavinia's
 face, and she rose from her seat; her move-
 ment recalled Walter from his temporary ab-
 straction.

"You are not going yet?" asked he; for
 now he clung, like a sick child, to the presence
 of his kind attendant.

"I am going," replied she, "earlier to-day,
 that I may come back the sooner; the reha-
 bilitation will be very short; and now, dear Walter,
 try and compose yourself."

"You are very, very kind," said he, in
 broken accents; and after placing water and
 a restorative medicine near him, the actress
 left the room. She left the chamber of death
 and of desolation, to rehearse the jests of a
 comedy.

CHAPTER CXII.

A REQUEST.

Trace the young poet's fate
 Fresh from his solitude—the child of dreams,
 His heart upon his lip, he seeks the world
 To find him fame and fortune, as if life
 Were like a fairy tale. His song has led
 The way before him; flatteries fill his ear,
 And he seems happy in so many friends.
 What marvel if he somewhat overrate
 His talents and his state!

"She sleeps now heavily, nor will she
 waken for some hours; every thing depends
 upon that awakening," said the physician.

"You have, then, hopes?" asked Ethel.

"That the body," replied the other, "may
 recover; but not the mind. Young lady, it
 would be wrong to deceive you; Lady March-
 mont is, I fear, irrecoverably insane."

She leant against the bed, pale, sick with
 the shock of his words; yet mingled with a
 strange and fearful relief. Insanity, with no
 further cause, would account for Henrietta's
 frantic ravings; and when she thought how
 gifted, how clever she was, it seemed impos-
 sible that such a mind could pass away in a
 single night. She hoped; she could not help
 hoping.

When the physician went away, she ap-
 proached the bed, and gazed upon Henrietta
 sleeping. How wan, and how attenuated was
 that beautiful face! the cheek fell in, with a
 complete hollow; and the black eyelashes, as
 they rested upon it, only served to show still
 more forcibly its deadly whiteness.

She had been restless at first; and some of the silvery gray hair fell over the forehead. Ethel put it softly back, and started to feel how the hot pulses throbbed beneath her touch. She carefully drew the curtains; and, leaving orders to be sent for should there be the slightest change, returned home.

It was a great relief to her oppressed spirits to find that her grandmother had an old friend come to pass the day with her, so the Cassandra was left in repose for that morning at least. She sought the little chamber peculiarly appropriated to her own use; and, seating herself by the window, sank into a sad and listless reverie.

It is a mood whose "profitless dejection" there are few among us but what have known. It is the result of the overstrained nerves, the worn-out frame—something of bodily weakness must mingle with it. We turn away from the future, we are too desponding to look forward. Every sorrow of the past seems to rise up, not only as a recollection of suffering, but as if each were an omen of what is to come. We feel as if even to wish were a folly; or, worse, a tempting of fate. We have no confidence in our own good fortune; it seems as if the mere fact of wishing were enough to have that wish denied. A fretful discontent gnaws at the heart, the worse for being ashamed to confess it.

But Ethel soon felt the error of giving way to this utter discouragement: she made it a duty to struggle against it. She rose from her seat; and, flinging open the casement, strove to divert her attention by looking out upon the river. She turned hastily away; she had no sympathy with the sunshine—the movement—the seeming cheerfulness of the world below. She took up her work, but that was no mental stimulus; she laid it down, and, going to her little bookcase, took down the first book that came to hand.

It was a favourite volume which she opened—"Fugitive Poems, by Walter Maynard." She had always taken an interest in one whom she had known from earliest childhood; and of late the melancholy in herself had harmonized with that which was the chief characteristic of his writings. She soon became interested: her sadness took a softer tone; for now it seemed understood, and met with tender pity. And this is the dearest privilege of the poet—to soothe the sorrowing, and to excite the languid hour; to renovate exhausted nature, by awakening it with the spiritual and the elevated; and bringing around our common hours shadows from those more divine.

Ethel was, however, interrupted by the appearance of her maid bringing her chocolate, and a message that a young person below was very anxious to see her.

"Show her up immediately," was Miss Churchill's reply, who was, however, a little startled when she found that her visitor was her former attendant, Lavinia Fenton. But her first glance at the young actress was enough: she was pale, thin, and the trace of

tears were yet recent on her cheeks. She had been very wrong to leave her mistress as she had done; and to Ethel's quiet and secluded habits her having gone on the stage seemed absolutely awful; but she was obviously suffering; and the only question was, how that suffering could be assisted?

Ethel approached her kindly, and made her sit down and take some refreshment, before she would even ask her what was her present business.

"I do not come on my own account," exclaimed Lavinia, eagerly: "believe me, Miss Churchill, I remember all your former kindness, and know too well the difference between us, not to know the best way I can mark my sense of it, is never to come near you."

"O, Lavinia!" exclaimed her young mistress; "how could you leave us? we used to be so fond of each other! surely I shall be able to prevail upon you to leave your present mode of life. Tell me, what can we do for you?"

"Nothing," said the girl, touched to the very heart by Ethel's kindness; "I could not come to you if I had been starving in the streets. Now I do not come for myself."

"On whose account, then?" exclaimed her listener.

Lavinia hesitated, she had persuaded herself into her visit; the whole way she had invented speeches, she had quite settled how to meet any possible objection; but now her voice failed her, her frame shook with strong emotion, and it was some moments before she could reply.

"Ah, madam! I wish you could have witnessed the scene which I have just left. I am come from the death-bed, in hopes that you will grant the last earthly wish which seems to haunt it."

"Could you doubt one moment that I should?" interrupted Ethel: "only tell me what it is?"

"Do you remember," asked the actress, "Walter Maynard?"

"Do I remember him?" exclaimed Ethel, her eye unconsciously falling on the volume which she had just been reading, and which still lay open on the table,—"*It would, indeed, be difficult to forget him.*"

The quick glance of the actress followed her look. "Ah!" said she, "you have been reading his works: he will write no more beautiful verses to you; for he is dying—dying, too, in miserable want!"

"My God!" cried Ethel, springing from her seat, "let us go to him!—what can we do? Let me find my grandmother!"

Lavinia gently detained her. "Walter Maynard," continued she, "is far beyond all human help; his days—ay, his very hours—are numbered: but you may fling over them one last gleam of human happiness."

"I!" cried Ethel.

"You—you whom he has loved so long, so truly! You saw it not, you thought only of another; but Walter Maynard loved you very

shadow; and such have you been to him through life."

Ethel stood breathless with surprise; she looked back to Walter with the affectionate regard which lingers around one whom we have known in early life, and have never seen since. Of late, her imagination had dwelt upon him with that picturesque interest with which we are apt to invest the writer whose pages appeal to our feelings.

Lavinia saw her emotion, and added, "Not that your name ever passed his lips; save in the muttered wish of this morning, he never spoke of you. If you could see him now—so hanged, so pale—you would pity him."

"Pity him!" exclaimed Ethel, no longer able to suppress her tears.

"You will come, then?" asked the actress.

"Yes, the instant I have spoken to my grandmother;" and, ringing the bell, desired that her chair might be sent round immediately.

"It is a long way off," said Lavinia, "and must hurry away. I always dread what may have happened during my absence."

"Is he so very ill?" interrupted Ethel.

"Lady, he is dying," replied the other. Then, laying the address, with written directions, on the table, she hurried away, leaving her young mistress in a state of the most painful agitation.

Ethel could scarcely believe, after the actress had left her, but what she had been in a dream. "Good heavens!" exclaimed she, "what a precious thing love is! what a gift of all hope, all happiness, into the power of another!—and yet, how often is it bestowed in vain! wasted, utterly and cruelly wasted! Well, if he loved me, there has been a sad and bitter sympathy between us. Can he have been more wretched than I have been?" and, covering her face with her hands, she gave way to a passionate burst of weeping.

It was so long before she recovered, that her chair was ready first: and, startled at the announcement, she hastened to ask her grandmother's permission for her visit. It was instantly granted; for Mrs. Churchill had always liked Walter, and had taken a personal satisfaction in his literary success. It was a compliment to her discernment. If ever we forgive another's celebrity, it is when it fulfils our own prophecy. But to have him, who had been a little child playing at her feet, dying in desolation and misery, roused every kindly feeling. She hurried Ethel to put on her cloak, and saw herself to the packing up of a basket; containing one or two medicines in which she placed implicit faith, and a note from herself, begging him to come at once to her house to be nursed.

The bustle over, a glow of self-satisfaction in spite of her sorrow, diffusing itself; and, taking one of his volumes, she went to her own chair, and soon found herself shedding tears over the strange mixture of real and ideal misery.

CHAPTER CXIII.

THE DISCLOSURE.

Young, loving, and beloved—these are brief words
And yet they touch on all the finer chords,
Whose music is our happiness; the tone
May die away, and be no longer known,
In the sad changes brought by darker years,
When the heart has to treasure up its tears,
And life looks mournful on an altered scene—
Still it is much to think that it has been

ETHEL was yet bathing her eyes with elder flowers, preparatory to going, when her departure was again delayed by another visitor.

"Tell her," exclaimed she, "that I am just going to a dying friend—ask if she will see my grandmother."

The servant obeyed, but returned almost instantly, saying, "that the lady said, she must entreat Miss Churchill to see her for ten minutes, she would not detain her longer. Indeed, madam," continued the maid, "I think you had better go down, for she is quite the lady, and seems so miserable at the idea of your not seeing her."

"Perhaps," said Ethel, "I had better see her, a few minutes cannot much matter. I know by myself," added she, in a lower tone, "that sorrow is impatient."

On entering the parlour into which the visitor had been shown, she saw a tall figure, wrapped in a dark mantle, with her back towards her, in one of the recesses of the windows. The noise of her steps, light as they were, attracted the stranger's notice, who, turning round and letting her mantle fall as she did so, showed a tall and stately figure, dressed in what appeared to be some conventional costume. Her face, though thin and pale, bore the traces of great former beauty; and, although Ethel was sure that she had never seen the lady before, yet there was something in her features strangely familiar.

The colour came rapidly into her cheek; her heart told her the face now before her brought the memory of one still too dearly remembered—it was Norbourne Courtenaye that it recalled; the likeness was, despite the difference of sex and age, singularly striking.

What a vain thing is forced forgetfulness! For months Ethel had sedulously banished one image from her thoughts, and she fancied that she had succeeded: alas! even a chance and casual resemblance sufficed to make her tremble with emotion. To such emotion she had long made it a rule not to give way. She steadied her voice; though, with all her resolution, it was a little tremulous; and, entreating her visitor to be seated, asked what were her commands.

The stranger appeared almost to forget that it was her business to speak: she fixed her dark, penetrating eyes on the beautiful girl, who stood, blushing and confused, at the scrutiny.

"Perhaps," said Ethel, a little apprehensively—for the garb of her companion made her think that, perhaps, she was some Jacobite

emissary—"it was my grandmother whom you wished to see?"

"No, no, it was yourself!" exclaimed the stranger, eagerly, as if startled by Ethel's voice. "Pardon me, young lady, but I am not well; and to myself my errand is a painful one."

"Pray do not stand," said Ethel; and, drawing a large arm-chair, took the stranger's hand, and gently forced her to be seated.

"Pray sit by me," continued the lady; and Ethel placed herself in the window-seat, wondering at her singular visitor, in whom, however, she could not help feeling interested. "I ought to tell you my name," exclaimed the stranger, breaking silence by an obvious effort, "I am Mrs. Courtenaye."

Ethel started to her feet, turning deadly pale, and sank again on her seat; and her visitor seemed almost startled at the effect which her words had produced. Miss Churchill had, however, for months subjected her feelings to a discipline too severe to be wholly overcome by them now. Her features became cold and calm; and there was a slight touch of haughtiness in her manner, as she said,

"May I be permitted to ask the cause why Mrs. Courtenaye honours me with a visit?"

"Because the happiness of my only child is in your hands—because," exclaimed she, "I have recently stood by the bed that was every hour expected to be that of death, and, during the delirium of fever, yours was the only name upon Norbourne's lips."

"Mrs. Courtenaye," replied Ethel, rising, "it is useless to prolong an interview which can only be humiliating and painful to both."

"Listen to me," cried Mrs. Courtenaye, catching her hand, and detaining her.

"Nay," replied her companion: "I can understand and pity your feelings; but you must, also, respect mine. I entreat you not to enter on a subject which inflicts on me—I will tell you frankly—inflicts on me a degree of pain of which you have little idea."

"You do love him, then?" cried Mrs. Courtenaye.

"Madam," returned Ethel, again attempting to leave the room, "you can have no possible right to ask the question."

"I am wrong," exclaimed the other; "but solitude has made my habits abrupt, and my very anxiety defeats my object. All that I implore is, that you will listen to me patiently—listen to me, lady, but for five minutes."

What could Ethel do but resume her seat? and Mrs. Courtenaye continued,—

"Do tell me, before I proceed, whether there was any other motive for your rejection of Norbourne's renewed address than resentment's for his former inconstancy?"

"Do not call it resentment," cried Ethel; "perhaps it will save a continuance of this to me most distressing conversation, if I say, that Mr. Courtenaye's conduct has been such that I never could permit myself to regard him with, if you will force it from me, my *once trusting affection*."

"You do not know," interrupted Mrs.

Courtenaye, "the circumstances in which he was placed."

"I believe that I do," returned the other, coldly.

Mrs. Courtenaye looked amazed; a sudden fear, that her story was not the profound secret that she supposed it to be, came over her, and she asked faintly—"What do you suppose those circumstances to have been?"

"Embarrassments," returned Ethel, with an expression of as much scorn as her sweet face would express, "from which his cousin's wealth set him free."

"O, you are quite wrong!" cried his mother; "no love of fortune, nor of ambition, could have tempted Norbourne to desert you. Little, indeed, do you know his high and generous nature, when you suppose that he could be actuated by an interested motive."

"Was it, then," asked Ethel, faintly, "love for his cousin?"

"No," replied Mrs. Courtenaye, "it was love for his mother."

"I do not know," exclaimed Miss Churchill, a little natural pride increasing her indignation, "why you should have objected to his union with one who, in fortune and family, was his equal in every way; and who loved him—how deeply, how dearly, my own heart only can tell! But why do you thus seek to stir up again feelings, with which you have each so cruelly trifled?"

"Reproach me!" said Mrs. Courtenaye, "I deserve it; but do not blame Norbourne. Never has his heart changed from its entire affection for you; and little do you know the wretchedness that he has endured."

"Madam, you might have spared us both this. I pity him! I pity myself!" exclaimed she, struggling with the tears she could no longer suppress; "but my love and my esteem must go together, and you obliged me to tell you that Mr. Courtenaye has forfeited the last."

"But I can restore it to him," cried Mrs. Courtenaye; "I have already delayed my explanation too long: you are an orphan, Miss Churchill; but have you never thought how sweet it would have been to have had a mother—one who knelt, blessing your pillow, every night, and watched your steps during day? Suppose that you had such a parent, that you knew you had been from your birth her only object in the wide, cold world, would you not have made some sacrifice for her sake?"

"Any, even to my life!" returned Ethel, in a faltering voice.

"Suppose," continued Mrs. Courtenaye, "that that mother had knelt at your feet; told you that her life, and, far more precious than life, her honour, were in your hands, and implored you to save them, would you not have yielded to her frantic entreaties?"

"I would!" cried Ethel, but her voice was scarcely audible.

Mrs. Courtenaye then rapidly sketched her previous history; and, long before it was ended, Ethel had bowed her face in her hands, and was weeping bitterly.

"O!" exclaimed she, "true and generous
ever! how I have misjudged him!"
"The atonement is in your own hands,"
said Mrs. Courtenay; "you will let him see
this evening?"
"If he loves me still," whispered Ethel;
now she felt deep in her own heart, that
eternity knows no change, nor shadow of
sorrow.

CHAPTER CXIV.

MEETING.

Over that pallid face were wrought
The characters of painful thought;
But on that lip, and in that eye,
Were patience, faith, and piety.
The hope that is not of this earth,
The peace that has in pain its birth;
As if, in the tumult of this life,
Its sorrow, vanity, and strife,
Had been but as the lightning's shock,
Shedding rich ore upon the rock:
Though in the trial scorched and riven
The gold it wins, is gold from heaven.

THE window of Walter Maynard's small
wretched chamber looked into a church-
yard, the same on which he had gazed the
night of his arrival in London. It was one
of those dreary burial places, where nothing
remains the desolate aspect of mortality.
Square, upright tombstones were crowd-
ed together as if there were not room for the
dead. It may be a weakness, though
wringing out of all that is most redeeming in
nature—the desire that is in us to make
city of the departed beautiful, as well as
red. The green yew that flings down its
dew, the wild flowers that spring up in
long grass, take away from the desolation,
they are the type and sign of a world beyond
ourselves. Even as spring brings back the
leaf to the bough, the blossom to the grass,
will a more glorious spring return to that
which is now but a little human dust.
Suddenly, Walter Maynard turned from the
window, out of which he had been gazing
gloomily and silently: "And there," exclaimed
"I shall be laid in the course of a few
years, it may be hours. I loathe those dull,
upright stones. Do you care where you are
laid?" said he, turning suddenly to Lavinia.

"Not the least! What difference can it
make?" asked she.

"It is strange," continued he, "that the
fession of both has its existence in opinion,
yet you care nothing for what is abstract
and picturesque in it."

"You have cared only too much," replied
she, gazing upon him sadly.

"Not so," returned he earnestly, a last
spark of enthusiasm kindling up his large
dark eyes; "I have not cared enough.
I reply do I feel at this moment, when the
cherished thoughts obey my bidding no longer,
in the hand, once so swift to give them tan-
gle shape, lies languid at my side, that I
have not done half that I ought to have done."

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How many hours of wasted time, how many
worse than wasted, now rise up in judgment
against me! And, O, my God! have I suf-
ficiently felt the moral responsibility of gifts
like my own? Have I not questioned, some-
times too rashly, of what it was never meant
mortal mind should measure? Have I not
sometimes flung the passing annoyance of a
wounded feeling too bitterly on my pages?
I repent me of it now!"

He paused, for the dews gathered on his
forehead; but again the transient light kind-
led in his face, till it was even as that of an
angel. Earthly passion, whether of anger or
of sorrow, had faded from that pure white
brow; the eyes looked back the heaven on
which they gazed—they were full of it.

"O, my Creator!" exclaimed he, clasping
his thin, wan hands, "I am not worthy of the
gifts bestowed upon me! Let me not forget
that, though this worn and fevered frame
perish, the soul ascends hopeful, meekly
hopeful, of its native heaven; and my mind
remains behind to influence and to benefit its
race: may what was in aught evil of its crea-
tions be forgotten; may aught that was good,
endure to the end. There is a deep and sacred
assurance at my heart, that what I have done
will not be quite in vain. Even at this last
moment, I feel it is sweet to bequeath my mem-
ory to the aspirations and sympathies of my
kind."

He leaned back—pale, faint, but calm;
and, at that moment, Lavinia, who had been
occupied by anxious expectation of Miss
Churchill's arrival, was called from the room.

"Can you," said she, on her return, "re-
ceive a visitor whom, only yesterday, you
were wishing to see?"

An instinct of the heart seemed to tell Wal-
ter who the visitor was, and a faint colour
came, for a moment, over his face.

"She has come!" exclaimed he; "let me
look upon her, and die happy!"

He strove to rise, but the next moment
Ethel's gentle hand forced him to be seated;
as, in a broken voice, she said, "O, Walter!
was it kind to let your old friends find you
thus?"

He looked at her with a sweet, calm smile,
as he answered, "They find me happy!"

CHAPTER CXV.

PARTING.

That is love
Which chooseth from a thousand only one
To be the object of that tenderness
Natural to every heart; which can resign
Its own best happiness for one dear sake;
Can bear with absence; hath no part in hope,
For hope is somewhat selfish: love is not,
And doth prefer another to itself.

"Do not," whispered Walter, as he watch-
ed Ethel's eyes glance round the room, and
then turn mournfully on himself, "do not pity
the poverty which surrounds me; but for that
I should have lost the greatest happiness life
offers."

has known. It is to your gentle charity that I owe this visit, that my last look will fall on the face which has to me been, through life, my most sweet and sacred dream. Fairest and dearest, if I leave behind me aught of passionate feeling, and of true emotion, it is to your inspiration that I owe it."

Another visitor disturbed them: and softly, but hastily, Norbourn Courtenaye entered the room.

"O, Walter!" exclaimed he, "did our true friendship deserve that you should let me find you thus? I have found you, too, with such difficulty—"

He broke off abruptly, for he caught sight of Ethel. There was, however, no time for indulgence of individual feeling; for, overcome by the exertion just made, Walter had sunk back in his chair fainting. In a few moments he revived, but a change had passed over his countenance—death was in every feature. Once more his large dark eyes lighted with transient lustre, as he gazed earnestly on Ethel and Norbourn, who stood before him.

"Do you remember," said he, in a voice so hollow and so low, that the accents were scarce audible, "the last evening that we spent beside the little fountain? Why should coldness have taken the place of that love which I then believed was so happy, so perfect? What could have parted you? At this moment, though your looks are averted, there is love in them, that love which nothing else can supply. I pray of you, let no worldly motive, no false pride, no vanity, come between your affection!"

He was holding a hand of each; and, feebly, he put them together. Norbourn started, for he felt that Ethel did not withdraw hers. He looked at her for a moment; her eyes dropped, but in that sweet and conscious look he read a new world of hope and love.

"God bless you!" said Walter. "Lavinia! my kind, my generous nurse!" added he, in accents more and more broken, "may your kindness to me be requited tenfold! Ah! if my dying words might in aught avail, you would leave—"

But his words died in a strange gurgling in the throat; the eyes suddenly became fixed; the mouth fell; once he stretched out his hands convulsively, but they instantly relaxed, and his head sunk on Norbourn's arm. They raised him; and, carrying him to the bed, laid him there. Pale, tranquil, and sweet, his face looked sleep, not death. They knelt by the bedside, at first too awe-struck for sorrow; prayers, not tears, seemed fitted to the scene: they felt as if around them were the presence of Heaven.

And so perished, in the flower of his age, in the promise of his mind, the high-minded and gifted Walter Maynard. He died poor, surrounded by the presence of life's harsh and evil allotment, but the faithful and affectionate spirit kept its own to the last. Depressed, sorrowful, he might be, as he went on a hard path wearily; but he died hopeful and loving.

His poet's heart clung to this world, but to leave it a rich legacy of feelings and of thoughts; his spirit welcomed death, the eternal guide to the mighty world beyond the grave.

How many beautiful creations, how many glorious dreams went with him to the tomb! but the unfulfilled destiny of genius is a mystery whose solution is not of earth. It is but one of those many voices wandering in this wilderness of ours that tell us, not here is our lot appointed to finish. We are here but for a space and a season; for a task and a trial, and of the end no man knoweth. The earthly immortality of the mind is but a type of the heavenly immortality of the soul. Peace be to the beating heart and the worn spirit that had just departed, "where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest!"

CHAPTER CXVI.

THE END.

Farewell!
Shadows and scenes that have, for many hours
Been my companions; I part from ye like friends—
Dear and familiar ones—with deep sad thoughts,
And hopes, almost minglings!

"FORGIVE me," said Lord Norbourn, as he led the bride into the little chapel, where, at his desire, the marriage was to take place, "if, with vain confidence in myself, I, too rashly took the happiness of others into my own keeping. Forgive me for the sake of my lost Constance, whose place to me you will fill, while this life lasts!"

Ethel could not speak, but her look was enough. Mrs. Courtenaye was not at her son's second marriage; unyielding, yet generous, she was one of those spirits to whom self-sacrifice is a relief. The faith of solitude and penance suited her mind; and she had entered one of those convents which, quiet and secluded, existed yet in England. In her eyes the sacrifice was atonement, and an offering for others. Sincere and enthusiastic in her belief, the prayers that, for years, she offered for her son's happiness, made her own.

Both Mrs. Churchill and Lord Norbourn lived to an extreme old age; the last, with a happiness around his latter days, that had never belonged to his earlier years. The loss of his youngest and most beloved child had been to him the bitterest feeling of his life; but it had worked in him for good. Sorrow had subdued, and affection had softened, his nature; his sweet child had been his good angel. Her latest prayer was fulfilled even in this world; and her father found, beside the hearth of her husband, the interest and the solace of his old age.

Lavinia Fenton's history belongs to that of her time. In spite of Miss Churchill's entreaties, she continued on the stage; and her success in *Polly*, of the *Beggars' Opera*, is well known. She ended by becoming Duchess of Bolton; one of those strange instances

mere worldly prosperity, which set all binary calculation at defiance.

The conclusion of Lady Mary Wortley Montague's career is, also, matter of history; of its grave, sad lessons. Clever—beautiful—with every advantage of nature and force, her youth was a vain search after happiness, under the mistaken name of pleasure. I not know a moral picture more degrading than the weakness which, for years, made her sink from the sight of a looking-glass; nor thing more disconsolate than her long residence, during her advanced life, in a foreign country, remote alike from the sphere of her ties and her affections. Brilliant—witty—reaching into human nature, as her letters doubtfully are, there is a fearful deficiency all higher feeling and nobler motive; the only redeeming point—but how much, indeed, is that redeem—is her tenderness for her daughter. We owe, also, to Lady Mary the introduction of inoculation—the moral courage displayed; the blessing conferred by her exertions may well silence the harsh judgment which suits so little with our narrow and finite intelligence.

It was just such an evening, by

"Departed summer tenderly illumined,"

the one on which our narrative commenced, that Norbourn and Ethel stood beside the fountain, whose scattered silver fell over blue harebells around.

They had been married at Norbourn Park, they mutually wished to pass the first few weeks of their wedded happiness in the place which had witnessed the commencement of their love. We can bear to look back on past suffering when in the very fulness of content. Norbourn had been leaning for some time on the soft shadows, that, as they faded, gave each a new aspect to the land-

scape around, before Ethel joined him. She came down the same winding path, through the wilderness, by which Henrietta had joined them the night before she went to London.

"You look pale, dearest," said Norbourn! "these daily visits to Lady Marchmont, in her wretched state, are too much for you."

"Not so," replied Ethel; "you would not, I am sure, wish me to shrink from what I hold to be a duty, though a painful one. Poor Henrietta has no friend in the world but myself. Hopeless as her madness is, though she knows me not, my presence soothes her; and with me she is gentle as a child."

"Incurable insanity!" exclaimed Norbourn, "violent or melancholy, it is an awful visitation on one so young, so beautiful, and so gifted!"

"God grant," said Ethel, "that her sufferings in this world may be her atonement in the next. As far as human skill can say, years, long years, are before her. To us, Norbourn, she will be as a sister, is it not so?"

Her husband's only answer was to clasp still closer the hand that he held in his. "You must come with me," said he, after a few moments' silence; "you will now know why I would not let you go through the churchyard this week."

They turned into the little path that led to the church, whose Gothic windows were kindled by the setting sun. Even the dark yew trees were lighted up as if by some lustrous and spiritual presence. His wife saw that beneath the one to which they were approaching, a monument had been newly erected.

"It was his last wish," said Norbourn, "not to be buried in London."

"Ethel looked up, and read on a white marble tablet the brief inscription of—"SACRED TO THE MEMORY OF WALTER MAYNARD."

VIVIAN GREY.

BOOK THE FIRST.

CHAPTER I.

THE CONSULTATION.

aware that the infancy of Vivian Grey ended by any extraordinary incident. He was the most affectionate of mothers, the care of the most attentive of nurses, and he was determined not to injure an excellent constitution. Vivian was an only child, and these were therefore excusable. For the first time in his life, Master Vivian, with his curly hair and his fancy dress, was the pride of his mother. The envy of all neighbouring establishments in process of time the horrible spirit began to develop itself, and Vivian not only brushed his hair "straight," and rebelled against the nurse, but actually insisted upon being spoiled. At this crisis it was discovered that the child was nearly ten years old, and he was sent to school. Mr. Grey observed, "I won't go to school, mamma," bawled Vivian.

"But you must, my love," answered Mrs. Grey; "all good boys go to school;" and in the plenitude of a mother's love, she tried to make her offspring's hair curl. "I won't have my hair curl, mamma; the boys will laugh at me," rebawled the beauty. "Now, who could have told the child that?" monologized mamma, with all a mamma's admiration. "Charles Appleyard told me so—his hair curled, and the boys called him *girl*. Papa, give me some more claret—I won't go to school."

"Right in the child, my dear—*Pictorial*!—*pictorial* fool's head!"

"What do you say to Flummery's, Grey?" "Do what you like. I never trouble myself to know about these matters;" and Mr. Grey brushed himself, after this domestic attack, with a glass of claret.

It was a gentleman who had succeeded, and the heat of youth was over, to the enjoy-

ment of a life interest in an estate of about 2000*l.* per annum. He was a man of distinguished literary abilities, and he had hailed with no slight pleasure, his succession to a fortune, which, though limited in its duration, was still a very great thing for a young *litterateur* about town; not only with no profession, but with a mind utterly unfitted for every species of business. Grey, to the astonishment of his former friends, the wits, made an excellent domestic match; and, leaving the whole management of his household to his lady, felt himself as independent in his magnificent library, as if he had never ceased to be that true freeman, A MAN OF CHAMBERS.

The young Vivian had not, by the cares which fathers are always heirs to, yet reminded his parent that boys were any thing else but playthings. The intercourse between father and son was, of course, extremely limited; for Vivian was, as yet, the mother's child; Mr. Grey's parental duties being confined to giving his son a glass of claret *per diem*, pulling his ears with all the awkwardness of literary affection, and trusting to God "that the urchin would never scribble."

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"Charles Appleyard told me so—his hair curled, and the boys called him *girl*. Papa, give me some more claret—I won't go to school."

CHAPTER II.

PROGRESS.

THREE or four years passed over, and the mind of Vivian Grey most astonishingly developed itself. He had long ceased to wear frills, had broached the subject of boots three or four times, made a sad inroad during the holidays in Mr. Grey's aforesaid bottle of claret, and was reported as having once sworn at the footman. The young gentleman began also to hint, during every vacation, that the fellows at Flummery's were somewhat too small for his companionship, and (first bud of puppyism!) the former advocate of *straight hair*, now expended a portion of his infant income in the purchase of Macassar oil, and began to cultivate

his curls. Mrs. Grey could not entertain for a moment, the idea of her son's associating with children, the eldest of whom (to adopt his own account) was not above eight years old; so Flummery's, it was determined, he should leave. But where to go? Mr. Grey wished Eton, but his lady was one of those women whom nothing in the world can persuade that a public school is any thing else but a place where boys are roasted alive; and so with tears, and taunts, and supplications, the point of private education was conceded. As for Vivian himself, he was for Eton, and Winchester, and Harrow, and Westminster, all at once; the only point that he made was, "not Rugby, it was so devilish blackguard."

At length it was resolved that *the only hope* should remain at home a season, until some plan should be devised for the cultivation of his promising understanding. During this year, Vivian became a somewhat more constant intruder into the library than heretofore; and living so much among books, he was insensibly attached to those silent companions, that speak so eloquently.

How far the character of the parent may influence the character of the child, I leave the metaphysician to decide. Sure I am, that the character of Vivian Grey underwent, at this period of his life, a sensible, a prodigious change. Doubtless, constant communion with a mind highly refined, severely cultivated, and much experienced, cannot but produce a most beneficial impression, even upon a mind formed, and upon principles developed: how infinitely greater must the influence of such communion be upon a youthful heart, ardent, innocent, and inexperienced! As Vivian was not to figure in the microcosm of a public school, a place for which, from his temper, he was almost better fitted than any young genius whom the "playing fields" of Eton, or "the hills" of Winton, can remember; there was some difficulty in fixing upon his future academus. Mr. Grey's two axioms were, first, that no one so young as his son should settle in the metropolis, and that Vivian must consequently not have a private tutor; and, secondly, that all private schools were quite worthless; and, therefore, there was every probability of Vivian not receiving any education whatever.

At length an exception to axiom second started up in the establishment of the Reverend Everard Dallas. This gentleman was a clergyman of the church of England, a profound Grecian, and a poor man. He had edited the *Alcestis*, and married his laundress—lost money by his edition, and his fellowship by his match. In a few days, the hall of Mr. Grey's London mansion was filled with all sorts of portmanteaus, trunks, and travelling cases, directed in a boy's sprawling hand to "Vivian Grey, Esquire, at the Reverend Everard Dallas, Burneley Vicarage, Hants."

"God bless you, my boy! I write to your mother soon, and remember your journal."

CHAPTER III.

PRIVATE EDUCATION.

THE rumour of the arrival of "a new fellow," circulated with rapidity through the inmates of *Burneley Vicarage*, and about fifty young devils

were preparing to quiz the new-comer, when the school-room door opened, and Mr. Dallas, accompanied by Vivian, entered.

"A dandy, by Jove!" whispered St. Ledger Smith. "What a knowing set out," squeaked Johnson *secundus*. "Mammy-sick," growled Barlow *primus*. This last exclamation was, however, a most scandalous libel, for certainly no being ever stood in a pedagogue's presence with more perfect *sang froid*, and with a bolder front, than did, at this moment, Vivian Grey.

One principle in Mr. Dallas' *régime*, was always to introduce a new-comer in school hours. He was thus carried immediately in *mediis res*, and the curiosity of his comrades being in a great degree satisfied, at a time when that curiosity could not personally annoy him, the new-comer was, of course, much better prepared to make his way, when the absence of the ruler became a signal for some oral conversation with "the arrival."

However, in the present instance the young savages at Burneley Vicarage had caught a tartar; and in a very few days Vivian Grey was decidedly the most popular fellow in the school. He was "so dashing! so devilish good-tempered! so completely up to every thing!" The magnates of the land were certainly rather jealous of his success, but their very sneers bore witness to his popularity. "Cursed puppy," said St. Ledger Smith. "Thinks himself knowing," squeaked Johnson *secundus*. "Thinks himself witty," growled Barlow *primus*.

Notwithstanding this cabal, days rolled on at Burneley Vicarage only to witness the increase of Vivian's popularity. Although more deficient than most of his own age in accurate classical knowledge, he found himself in talents and various acquirements immeasurably their superior. And singular is it, that at school, distinction in such points is ten thousand times more admired by the multitude, than the most profound knowledge of Greek metres, or the most accurate acquaintance with the value of Roman coins. Vivian Grey's English verses, and Vivian Grey's English themes, were the subject of universal commendation. Some young lads made copies of these productions, to enrich, at the Christmas holidays, their sisters' albums; while the whole school were scribbling embryo prize-poems, epics of twenty lines on "the ruins of Pæstum," and "the temple of Minerva," "Agrigentum," and "the cascade of Terni."—I suppose that Vivian's productions at this time, would have been rejected by the commonest twopenny publication about town—yet they turned the brain of the whole school; while fellows who were writing Latin dissertations, and Greek odes which might have made the fortune of the *Classical Journal*, were looked on by the multitude as great dunderheads as themselves:—and such is the advantage which, even in this artificial world, every thing that is genuine has over every thing that is false and forced. The dunderheads who wrote "*good Latin*," and "*Attic Greek*," did it by a process, by means of which the youngest fellow in the school was conscious he could, if he chose, attain at the same perfection. Vivian Grey's verses were unlike any thing which had yet appeared in the literary annals of Burneley Vicarage and that which was quite novel was naturally thought quite excellent.

There is no place in the world where greater homage is paid to talent than at an English school

school, indeed, if a youth of great ease with an amiable and generous nature ought not to envy the minister of any captain of Eton, or prefect of any school, as I am reading these pages, I would most treat him dispassionately to consider, in the station of life he can rationally expect to fill, in his power to exercise such influence, and such opportunities of obliging others, as are afforded of an *affectionate* and *grateful*.

Ay, there's the rub!—Bitter, bitter at gratitude should cease the moment men.

I am, that Vivian Grey was loved as dear as faithfully, as you might expect in young hearts. His slight accomplishments were the standard of all perfection; were the soul of all good fellowship; were the guide in any crisis which he monotonous existence of the little life. And time flew gayly on.

One evening, as Vivian, with some of his cronies, was standing round the fire, they began, as all schoolboys do, to talk of *how*.

"Weeks more," said Augustus Etherege, "is more, and we are free! The globe will be celebrated."

"a feast," exclaimed Poynings.

"Is but the work of a night," said Dallas: "something more stirring for me! to private theatricals!"

"Decision was, of course, received with and it was not until they had unanimously *to act*, that they universally remembering was *not allowed*. And then decided whether they should ask Dallas, who remembered that Dallas had been invited, and then they "supposed they took it up;" and then Vivian Grey made a speech in which the rest were secretly sighing which they were afraid to make themselves proposed that they should act without us—"Well, then, we'll do it without us," said Vivian:—"nothing is allowed and every thing is done:—in town they called the French play, and that's all yet my aunt has got a private box at me for acting—but what shall we

tion was, as usual, the fruitful source of opinions. One proposed Othello, chiefly because it was so easy to black a face with a

Another was for Hamlet solely bent to act the ghost, which he proposed in white shorts and a night-cap. As for Julius Cæsar, because the murder would be *such* fun."

"!" said Vivian, tired at these various proposals, "this will never do. Out with it; let's have a comedy!"

ly! a comedy!—O! how delightful!"

CHAPTER IV.

PRIVATE THEATRICALS.

an immense number of propositions, a number of repetitions, Dr. Hoadley's

bustling drama was fixed upon. Vivian was to act Ranger, Augustus Etherege was to personate Clarinda, because he was a fair boy and always blushing; and the rest of the characters found able representatives. Every half-holiday was devoted to rehearsals, and nothing could exceed the amusement and thorough fun which all the preparations elicited. Every thing went well—Vivian wrote a most pathetic prologue, and a most witty epilogue. Etherege got on capitally in the mask scene, and Poynings was quite perfect in Jack Meggot. There was, of course, some difficulty in keeping all things, in order, but then Vivian Grey was such an excellent manager! and then, with infinite tact, the said manager conciliated the *classiques*, for he allowed St. Ledger Smith to select a Greek motto—from the Andromache, if I remember right—for the front of the theatre; and Johnson *secundus* and Barlow *primus* were complimented by being allowed to act the chairmen.

But, alas! in the midst of all this sunshine, the seeds of discord and dissension were fast flourishing. Mr. Dallas himself was always so absorbed in some freshly imported German commentator, that it was a fixed principle with him, never to trouble himself with any thing that concerned his pupils, "out of school-hours." The consequence was, that certain powers were necessarily delegated to a certain set of beings called *USHERS*. In the necessity of employing this horrible race of human beings, consists, in a great measure, the curse of what is called, *private education*. Those, who, in all the fulness of parental love, guard their offspring from the imagined horrors of a public school, forget that, in having recourse to "an academy for young gentlemen," they are *necessarily* placing their children under the influence of *blackguards*; it is of no use to mince the phrase—such is the case. And is not the contagion of these fellows' low habits and loose principles much more to be feared and shunned, than a *system*, in which, certainly, greater temptations are offered to an imprudent lad; but under whose influence boys usually become gentlemanly in their habits and generous in their sentiments!

The usherian rule had, however, always been comparatively light at Burnley Vicarage, for the good Dallas, never for a moment intrusting the duties of tuition to a third person, engaged these deputies merely as a sort of police, to regulate the bodies, rather than the minds of his youthful subjects. One of the first principles of the new theory introduced into the establishment of Burnley Vicarage by Mr. Vivian Grey, was, that the ushers were to be considered by the boys as a species of upper servants; were to be treated with civility, certainly, as all servants are by gentlemen; but that no further attention was to be paid them, and that any fellow voluntarily conversing with an usher, was to be *cut dead* by the whole school. This pleasant arrangement was no secret to those whom it most immediately concerned, and, of course, rendered Vivian rather a favourite with them. The men, who were sufficiently *vulgar*, had not the tact to conciliate the boy by a little attention, and were both, notwithstanding, too much afraid of his influence in the school to attack him openly; so they waited with that patience which insulted beings can alone endure.

One of these creatures must not be forgotten.

his name was Mallet; he was a perfect specimen of the genuine usher. The monster wore a black coat and waistcoat; the residue of his costume was of that mysterious colour known by the name of pepper-and-salt. He was a pallid wretch with a pug nose, white teeth, and marked with the small-pox; and long, greasy, black hair; and small, black, beady eyes. This demon watched the progress of the theatrical company with eyes glowing with vengeance. No attempt had been made to keep the fact of the rehearsal a secret from the police; no objection on their part, had as yet been made; the twelve weeks diminished to six; Ranger had secretly ordered a dress from town, and was to get a steel handled sword from Fentum's for Jack Meggot; and every thing was proceeding with unexpected success, when one morning as Mr. Dallas was apparently about to take his departure, with a volume of Becker's Thucydides under his arm, the respected dominie stopped, and thus harangued: "I am informed that a great deal is going on in this family, with which it is intended that I shall be unacquainted. It is not my intention to name any body or any thing at present; but I must say that of late the temper of this family has sadly changed. Whether there be any *seditious stranger* among you or not, I shall not at present even endeavour to discover, but I will warn my *old friends* of their *new ones*." and so saying, the dominie withdrew.

All eyes were immediately fixed on Vivian, and the faces of the *classiques* were triumphant with smiles; those of the manager's particular friends, the *romantiques*, we may call them, were clouded; but who shall describe the countenance of Mallet? In a moment the school broke up with an agitated and tumultuous uproar. "No stranger!" shouted St. Ledger Smith; "No stranger," vociferated a prepared gang. Vivian's friends were silent, for they hesitated to accept for their leader the insulting title. Those who were neither Vivian's friends, nor in the secret, weak creatures who side always with the strongest, immediately swelled the insulting chorus of Mr. St. Ledger Smith. That worthy, emboldened by his success and the smiles of Mallet, contained himself no longer: "Down with the manager!" he cried. His satellites chorussed. But now Vivian rushed forward—"Mr. Smith, I thank you for being so definite;—take that!" and he struck Smith with such force that the Cleon staggered and fell; but Smith instantly recovered, and a ring was as instantly formed. To a common observer, the combatants were most unequally matched; for Smith was a burley, big-limbed animal, alike superior to Grey in years and strength. But Vivian, though delicate in frame, and more youthful, was full his match in spirit, and thanks to his being a cockney! ten times his match in science. He had not built a white great-coat, nor drunk blue ruin at Ben Burns' for nothing.

O! how beautiful he fought! how admirably straight he hit; and his stops quick as lightning! and his *followings up* confounding his adversary with their painful celerity! Smith, alike puzzled and punished, yet proud in his strength, hit round, and wild, and false, and foamed like a furious elephant. For ten successive rounds the result was dubious; but in the eleventh the strength of Smith began to fail, and the men wore more fairly matched. "Go it, Ranger!—go it, Ranger!" halloed the *Greyites*. "No stranger!—no stranger!"

eagerly bawled the more numerous party. "St. Ledger, floor'd, by Jove!" exclaimed Poynings, who Grey's second. "At it again! at it again!" claimed all. And now, when Smith must cease have given in, suddenly stepped forward Mr. Mallet, accompanied by—Dallas! "How Grey! No answer, sir; I understand that I have always an answer ready. I do not Scripture lightly, Mr. Grey; but 'Take heed that you offend not, even with your tongue,' sir, to your room."

When Vivian Grey again joined his panions, he found himself almost universally shunned. Etherege and Poynings were the individuals who met him with their former friendliness. "A horrible row, Grey," said the latter. "After you went, the doctor harangued the school, and swears you have seduced and us all;—every thing was happiness until he came, &c. Mallet is of course at the bottom of the whole business; but what can we do? I say you have the tongue of a serpent, and he will not trust himself to hear your infamous shame! I swear! And now, even Jove has got a story against you: some say you are a dandy—others want to know, whether your next piece performed at your theatre will be *Stranger*;—as for myself and Etherege, we leave in a few weeks, and it does not signify us; but what the devil you're to do next, Jove, I can't say.—If I were you, I would return." "Not return, eh? but that will I, if and we shall see who, in future, can compare the sweetness of my voice! Ungrateful for

CHAPTER V.

A NEW FRIEND.

THE vacation was over, and Vivian returned to Burnsley Vicarage. He bowed cavalierly to Dallas on his arrival, and immediately sat up into the school-room, where he found a considerable quantity of wretches, looking as miserable schoolboys, who have left their pleasant home, generally do for some four-and-twenty days. "How d'ye do, Grey?" "How d'ye do, Cleon?" burst from a knot of unhappy fellows, who have felt quite delighted, had their newly-companion condescended to entertain them, as with some capital good story fresh from Burnsley. But they were disappointed.

"We can make room for you at the fire," said Theophilus King.

"I thank you, I am not cold."

"I suppose you know that Poynings and his fellows don't come back, Grey?"

"Everybody knew that last half," and walked on.

"Grey, Grey!" halloed King, "don't go dining-room; Mallet's there alone, and told to disturb him. By Jove, the fellow's gone there'll be a greater row this half, between Mallet and the fellows."

Days—the heavy first days of the half-term, and all the citizens of the little common had returned.

"What a dull half this will be!" said I. "How one misses Grey's set!—After all the

school alive: Poynings was a first-rate fellow; and Etherege so deused good-natured! I wonder how Grey will *crony* with this half! Have you seen him and Dallas speak together yet? He cut a doctor quite dead at Greek to-day."

"Why, Eardly! Eardly! there's Grey walking and playing fields with Mallet!" hallooed a way who was killing the half holiday by looking out of the window.

"The devil! I say, Mathews, whose flute is it? It's a devilish handsome one!"

"It's Grey's! I clean it for him," squeaked a little boy. "He gives me sixpence a week!"

"O, you sneak!" said one.

"Cut him over!" said another.

"Roast him!" cried a third.

"Whom are you going to take the flute to?" he said a fourth.

"To Mallet," squeaked the little fellow; "Grey takes his flute to Mallet every day."

"Grey lend his flute to Mallet! the deuse he is! So Grey and Mallet are going to *crony*?"

A wild exclamation burst forth from the little fellow; and away each of them ran to spread in directions the astounding intelligence.

If the rule of the ushers had hitherto been light Burnley Vicarage, its character was materially aged during this half year. The vexatious and satirical influence of Mallet was now experienced in all directions; meeting and interfering with the sport of the boys, in every possible manner. Malice accompanied too by a *fact*, which could have been expected from his vulgar mind, and which, at the same time, could not have been proved by the experience of one in his situation. It was quite evident to the whole community that conduct was dictated by another mind, and that mind was once versed in all the secrets of a schoolboy's life, and acquainted with all the tricks of a schoolboy's mind: a species of *wledge* which no pedagogue in the world ever attained. There was no difficulty in discovering whose was the power behind the throne. Vivian Grey was the perpetual companion of Mallet in walks, and even in the school; he shunned the converse of every one of the boys, and not affect to conceal that his quarrel was *universal*. Superior power, exercised by a superior will, was for a long time too much even for the sedate exertions of the whole school. If any one gained, Mallet's written answer (and such he always required) was immediately ready, hinting every thing in the most satisfactory manner, and refuting every complaint with the most emphatic spirit. Dallas, of course, supported deputy, and was soon equally detested. This enemy had continued through a great part of the year; half year, and the spirit of the school was not broken, when a fresh outrage occurred, of a nature, that the nearly enslaved multitude inspired.

The plot was admirably formed. On the first ringing for school, the door was to be immediately barred, to prevent the entrance of Dallas. Then vengeance was then to be taken on Mallet his companion—the *sneak!* the *spy!* the *brat!*—The bell rang: the door was barred; stout fellows seized on Mallet; four rushed to seize Grey; but stop! he sprang upon his desk, placing his back against the wall, held a pistol in his foremost! "Not an inch nearer, Smith,

or—I fire. Let me not, however, balk your vengeance on yonder hound: If I could suggest any refinements in torture, they would be at your service." Vivian Grey smiled, while the horrid cries of Mallet indicated that the boys were "*roasting*" him. He then walked to the door, and admitted the barred-out dominie. Silence was restored. There was an explanation, and no defence: and Vivian Grey was—expelled.

CHAPTER VI.

THE CLASSICS.

VIVIAN GREY was now seventeen; and, the system of private education having so decidedly failed, it was resolved that he should spend the years antecedent to his going to Oxford at home. Nothing could be a greater failure than the first weeks of his "*course of study*." He was perpetually violating the sanctity of the drawing-room by the presence of scapulars and hederics, and outraging the propriety of morning visitors, by bursting into his mother's boudoir with lexicons and green slippers.

"Vivian, my dear," said his father to him, "this will never do; you must adopt some system for your studies, and some locality for your reading. Have a room to yourself; set apart certain hours in the day for your books, and allow no consideration on earth to influence you to violate their sacredness; and above all, my dear boy, keep your papers in order. I find a dissertation on 'the commerce of Carthage,' stuck in my large paper copy of 'Dibdin's Decameron,' and an 'Essay on the Metaphysics of Music' (pray, my dear fellow, beware of magazine scribbling) cracking the back of Montfaucon's Monarchie."

Vivian apologized, promised, protested, and finally sat down "TO READ." He had laid the first foundations of accurate classical knowledge under the tuition of the learned Dallas; and twelve hours a day, and self-banishment from society, overcame, in twelve months, the ill effects of his imperfect education. The result of this extraordinary exertion may easily be conceived. At the end of twelve months, Vivian, like many other young enthusiasts, had discovered that all the wit and wisdom of the world were concentrated in some fifty antique volumes, and he treated the unlucky moderns with the most sublime spirit of *hauteur* imaginable. A chorus in the Medea, that painted the radiant sky of Attica, disgusted him with the foggy atmosphere of Great Britain; and while Mrs. Grey was meditating a *sojourn* at Brighton, her son was dreaming of the gulf of Salamis. The spectre in the Persæ was his only model for a ghost, and the furies in the Agamemnon were his perfection of tragical machinery.

Most ingenious and educated youths have fallen into the same error; but few, I trust, have ever carried such feelings to the excess that Vivian Grey did; for while his mind was daily becoming more enervated under the beautiful but baneful influence of CLASSIC REVERIES, the youth lighted upon PLATO.

Wonderful is it, that while the whole soul of Vivian Grey seemed concentrated and wrapped up in the glorious pages of the Athenian—while with

keen and almost inspired curiosity, he searched, and followed up, and meditated upon, the definite mystery, the indefinite development,—while his spirit alternately bowed in trembling and in admiration, as he seemed to be listening to the secrets of the universe revealed in the glorious melodies of an immortal voice;—wonderful is it, I say, that the writer, the study of whose works appeared to the young scholar, in the revelling of his enthusiasm, to be the sole object for which man was born and had his being, was the cause by which Vivian Grey was saved from being all his life a dreaming scholar.

Determined to spare no exertions, and to neglect no means, by which he might enter into the very *penetrabilia* of his mighty master's meaning, Vivian determined to attack the latter Platonists. These were a race of men with whom he was perfectly unacquainted, and of whose existence he knew merely by the references to their productions, which were sprinkled in the commentaries of his "best editions." In the pride of boyish learning, Vivian had limited his library to classics, and the proud leaders of the latter schools did not consequently grace his diminutive bookcase. In this dilemma he flew to his father, and confessed by his request that his favourites were not all-sufficient.

"Father! I wish to make myself master of the latter Platonists. I want Plotinus, and Porphyry, and Iamblichus, and Syrianus, and Maximus Tyrius, and Proclus, and Hierocles, and Sallustius, and Damascius."

Mr. Grey stared at his son, and burst into a fit of laughter.

"My dear Vivian! are you quite convinced that the authors you ask for are all *pure* Platonists! or have not some of them placed the great end rather in *practical* than *theoretic* virtue, and thereby violated the first principles of your master, which would be very shocking! Are you sure, too, that these gentlemen have actually 'withdrawn the sacred veil which covers from profane eyes the luminous spectacles?' Are you quite convinced that every one of these worthies lived at least five hundred years after the great master; for I need not tell so profound a Platonist as yourself, that it was not till that period that even glimpses of the great master's meaning were discovered. Strange! that *TIME* should alike favour the philosophy of theory, and the philosophy of facts. Mr. Vivian Grey, benefiting, I presume, by the lapse of further centuries, is about to complete the great work which Proclus and Porphyry commenced."

"My dear sir, you are pleased to be very amusing this morning."

"My dear boy! I smile, but not with joy. Sit down, and let us have a little conversation together: father and son, and father and son on such terms as we are, should really communicate oftener together than we do. It has been, perhaps, my fault; it shall not be so again."

"My dear sir!"

"Nay, nay, it *shall* be my fault *now*. Whose it shall be in *future*, Vivian, time will show. My dear Vivian, you have now spent upwards of a year under this roof, and your conduct has been as correct as the most rigid parent might require. I have not wished to interfere with the progress of *your mind*, and I regret it. I have been negligent, but not wilfully so. I do regret it; because,

whatever may be your powers, Vivian, I have the advantage of *experience*. I see you at a word which I so often use. Well, will you talk to you forever, you would not understand what I mean by that *single word*. The next time, when you will deem that *single word* every thing. Ardent young men in their youth, Vivian, too often fancy that they are perfect; and I have no reason to believe that is an exception to the general rule. In the whole year of your life, as you have doubtless imagine that you have been your hours in a manner which no other has done before. Trust me, my boy, thousands have done the same; and what is of still more importance, thousands *are doing*, and *will do* it. Take the advice of one who has committed many, ay, more follies than yourself; would bless the hour that he had been his experience might be of benefit to his son."

"My father!"

"Nay, nay, don't agitate yourself; we must talk together. Let us see what is to be done. Endeavour to discover, when you are alone, the chief objects of your existence in the world. I want you to take no theological opinions for granted, nor to satisfy your doubts by a hasty conclusion; but, whether we are in this state of probation for another, or whether altogether when we cease to breathe, but things tell me that we have some duties to—our fellow creatures—to our friends and ourselves. Pray, tell me, my dear boy, what good your perusal of the latter Platonists has done to either of these three interests! that my child is not one of those who have glazed eyes on the welfare of their fellow-creatures who would dream away a useless life in puzzles of the brain; creatures who consider existence as an unprofitable mystery, and are afraid to die. You will find Plotinus in the next room, Vivian. Good to you."

CHAPTER VII.

THE CLASSICS.

THE communications between father and son after this day were very constant; and weeks Vivian employed his time rather in conversing with his father than with books. He did not he conceal (and when the fact is must not be conceived that Vivian's mind was weak one) that his *fixed principles* became loosened, and that his opinions were considerably modified. He speedily began to discover that there were *classics* in other languages besides Greek and Latin, and patient and dispassionate examination soon convinced him of the futility of that mass of insanity and ignorance—the Greek philosophy. Introduced to the study of noble spirits, the great poets, and the philosophers of modern Europe, the Vivian Grey recovered, in a study of their writings, a great portion of its original and primal vigour. Nor in his new world did he blaspheme against the former object of his adoration. He likened the ancient and

he two dispensations of Holy Writ:—*arose to complete the other.* *Æschylus* im not less divine, because *Shakspeare* ortal; nor did he deny the inspiration of *mes* because he recognised in *Burke* the *flatus*. The ancient literature, lost in *s*, degraded, and forgotten, ceased to be-
ety; the new literature arose. It hurled
high places," the idols of corrupt un-
gs and perverted taste; but while "it
he altars of the Lord," while it com-
ur reverence and our gratitude, the new
itself vailed to the first gray fathers of
n mind.

CHAPTER VIII.

SOCIETY.

gland, personal distinction is the only
to the society of the great. Whether
action arise from fortune, family, or talent,
erial; but certain it is, to enter into high
man must either have blood, a million,
us.

r the fortune nor the family of Mr. Grey
aim to mix in any other society than that
s in common parlance termed the middling
but from his distinguished literary abilities
lways found himself an honoured guest
he powerful and the great. It was for
n that he had always been anxious that
ould be at home as little as possible; for
l for a youth the fascination of London
Although busied with his studies, and
g "not to visit," Vivian could not avoid
ully finding himself in company in which
uld never be seen; and what was still
om a certain *esprit de société*, an inde-
cet with which nature had endowed him,
of nineteen began to think this society
ghtful. Most persons of his age would
sed through the ordeal with perfect safety:
ld have entered certain rooms, at certain
th stiff cravats, and nugee coats, and black
aistcoats; and after having annoyed all
o condescended to know of their existence,
ir red hands, and their white kid gloves,
ld have retired to a corner of the room,
versationized with any stray four-year-
yet sent to bed.

Vivian Grey was an elegant, lively lad,
enough of dandyism to preserve him from
og *gaucheries*, and with a devil of a
All men, I am sure, will agree with me
ay, that the only rival to be feared by a
spirit is—a clever boy. What makes
popular with the women, it is not for me
n; however, Lady Julia Knighton, and
ak Delmington, and half a score of dames
n, (and some of them very pretty,) were
stronizing our hero, who really found an
spent in their company not altogether
there is no fascination so irresistible to a
he smile of a married woman. Vivian
y passed such a reclusive life for the last
and a half, that he had quite forgotten
was once considered a very fascinating
nd so, determined to discover what right

he ever had to such a reputation, Master Vivian
entered into all those amourettes in very beautiful
style.

But Vivian Grey was a young and tender plant
in a moral hot-house. His character was develop-
ing itself too soon. Although his evenings were
now generally passed in the mahner we have
alluded to, this boy was, during the rest of the day,
a hard and indefatigable student; and having now
got through an immense series of historical reading,
he had stumbled upon a branch of study certainly
the most delightful in the world,—but, for a boy,
as certainly the most pernicious—THE STUDY OF
POLITICS.

And now every thing was solved! the inexpli-
cable longings of his soul, which had so often per-
plexed him, were at length explained. The *want*,
the indefinable *want*, which he had so constantly
experienced, was at last supplied; the great object
on which to bring the powers of his mind to bear
and work was at last provided. He paced his
chamber in an agitated spirit, and panted for the
senate.

It will be asked, what was the evil of all this?
and the reader will, perhaps, murmur something
about an honourable spirit and youthful ambition.
Ah! I once thought so myself—but the evil is too
apparent. The time drew nigh for Vivian to leave
for Oxford—that is, for him to *commence* his pre-
paration for entering on his career in life. And
now this person, who was about to be a *pupil*—
this boy, this stripling, who was going to begin his
education, had all the feelings of a matured mind
—of an experienced man; was already a cunning
reader of human hearts; and felt conscious, from
experience, that his was a tongue which was born
to guide human beings. The idea of Oxford to
such an individual was an insult!

CHAPTER IX.

THE NEW THEORY.

I MUST endeavour to trace, if possible, more
accurately the workings of Vivian Grey's mind at
this period of his existence. In the plenitude of
his ambition, he stopped one day to inquire in
what manner he could obtain his magnificent ends.

"THE BAR—pooh! law and bad jokes till we
are forty; and then, with the most brilliant success,
the prospect of gout and a coronet. Besides, to
succeed as an advocate, I must be a great lawyer,
and to be a great lawyer I must give up my chance
of being a great man. THE SERVICES in war time
are fit only for desperadoes, (and that truly am I,)
but, in peace, are fit only for fools. THE CHURCH
is more rational. Let me see; I should certainly
like to act Wolsey; but the thousand and one
chances against me! And truly I feel my destiny
should not be on a chance. Were I the son of a
millionaire, or a noble, I might have *all*. Curse
on my lot! that the want of a few rascal counters,
and the possession of a little rascal blood, should
mar my fortunes!"

Such was the general tenor of Vivian's thoughts,
until, musing himself almost into madness, he at
last made, as he conceived, the GRAND DISCOVERY.
"*Riches are power*, says the economist:—and is
not intellect? asks the philosopher. And yet,

while the influence of the millionaire is instantly felt in all classes of society, how is it that 'noble mind' so often leaves us unknown and unhonoured? Why have there been statesmen who have never ruled, and heroes who have never conquered? Why have glorious philosophers died in a garret? and why have there been poets whose only admirer has been nature in her echoes! It must be that these beings have thought only of themselves, and, constant and elaborate students of their own glorious natures, have forgotten or disdained the study of all others. Yes; we must mix with the herd; we must enter into their feelings; we must humour their weaknesses; we must sympathize with the sorrows that we do not feel; and share the merriment of fools. O, yes! to *rule* men, we must *be* men; to prove that we are strong, we must be weak; to prove that we are giants, we must be dwarfs; even as the eastern genie was hid in the charmed bottle. Our wisdom must be concealed under folly, and our constancy under caprice.

"I have been often struck by the ancient tales of Jupiter's visits to the earth. In these fanciful adventures, the god bore no indication of the thunderer's glory; but was a man of low estate, a herdsman, or other hind; and often even an animal. A mighty spirit has in *tradition*, time's great moralist, perused 'the wisdom of the ancients.' Even in the same spirit, I would explain Jove's terrestrial visitings. For to govern man, even the god appeared to feel as a man; and sometimes, as a beast, was apparently influenced by their vilest passions. Mankind, then, is my great game.

"At this moment how many a powerful noble wants only wit to be a minister; and what wants Vivian Grey to attain the same end? That noble's influence. When two persons can so materially assist each other, why are they not brought together? Shall I, because my birth balks my fancy—shall I pass my life a moping misanthrope in an old chateau? Supposing I am in contact with this magnifico, am I prepared? Now let me probe my very soul. Does my cheek blush? I have the mind for the conception; and I can perform right skilfully upon the most splendid of musical instruments—the human voice—to make those conceptions beloved by others. There wants but one thing more—*courage*, pure, perfect courage;—and does Vivian Grey know fear?" He laughed an answer of bitterest derision.

CHAPTER X.

A LOUNGE.

Is any one surprised that Vivian Grey, with a mind teeming with such feelings, should view the approach of the season for his departure to Oxford, with sentiments of thorough disgust? After many hours of bitter meditation, he sought his father; he made him acquainted with his feelings, but concealed from him his actual views, and dwelt on the misery of being thrown back in life, at a period when society seemed instinct with a spirit peculiarly active, and when so many openings were daily offered to the adventurous and the bold.

"Vivian," said Mr. Grey, "beware of endea-

vouring to be a great man in a hurry. O attempt in ten thousand may succeed: it is fearful odds. Admirer as you are of Lord Byron, you may perhaps remember a certain passionist, called 'Memnon, or a youth too!' I hope you are not going to be one of the 'sons of Aurora,' who, puffed up with the glitter of vanity and ostentation, attempt actions beyond their strength."

"You talk to me about the peculiar spirit of society: if the spirit of society is so peculiarly active, Mr. Vivian Grey should least it outstrip him. Is neglecting to manage my mind, my boy, exactly the way to win it? This is an age of unsettled opinions and principles:—in the very measures of our legislation, the speculative spirit of the present is to say the least, not impalpable. Nay, do my dear fellow, and look the very prospect of political economy! I know exactly who is going to say; but if you please we'll leave it to Mr. Canning and the House of Commons, or your cousin Hargrave and his debating society. However, jesting apart, hat, and walk with me as far as Evan's; have promised to look in, to see the Bible, and we'll talk this affair over as we go along."

"I am no bigot, you know, Vivian. I am one of those who wish to oppose the age of refined philosophy to the common business of life. We are, I hope, an improving race in this room, I am sure, for great improvement is the perfectibility of man is certainly a very great dream. (How well that Union Club House suits the purpose now, since they have made the opening for steam kitchens, but the nature is, I imagine, much the same as that of the old Pall Mall East, where some thousands of years ago, when as we were walking on the banks of the Nile, our moral powers increase in proportion to the physical ones, then huzza for the perfect man! and respectable, idle loungers, like I, Vivian, may then have a chance of being in the streets of London without having their heels trodden upon; and a ceremony which I have just now undergone. In the present day, all studying science, and none of us are ourselves. This is not exactly the Society of the Future; and as for the *young men* of the modern Athenian, that principle is quite out of the nineteenth century. (I believe the phrase.) Self is the only person whom we should care nothing about."

"But, my dear Vivian, as to the point of our consideration:—In my life, I have been influenced and uncontrolled by passion or I cannot but see that it is utterly impossible that we are wishing and striving for place, without some—without much evil years' time, perhaps, or less, the fever will subside, and in ten years' time, or less, the intellect will be matured. Now, the good of talking about the active spirit of the age, the opportunities offered to the adventurous, ought you not rather to consider yourself, that a great change is being effected in the period of your life when you need not ally, be subjected to the possibility of being influenced by its operation; and when you are

ur mind to take advantage of the system, when at system is matured and organized?

"As to your request, it assuredly is one of the not modest, and the most rational, that I have ever been favoured with. Although I would not rather that any influence that I may exercise on your mind, should be the effect of my advice as your friend, than of my authority as your father; still I really feel it my duty, parentally, to protest against this very crude proposition of yours. However, if you choose to lose a term or two, do not blame me, you know, if afterwards you pent it."

Here dashed by the gorgeous equipage of Mrs. Mordaunt, the wife of a man who was working all a gold and silver mines in Christendom. "Ah! my dear Vivian," said Mr. Grey, "it is *this* which has turned all your brains. In this age every one striving to make an immense fortune, and what more terrific, at the same time, a speedy one. His thirst for sudden wealth it is, which engenders the extravagant conceptions, and fosters that wild spirit of speculation which is now stalking abroad; and which like the demon in Frankenstein, not only fearfully wanders over the whole face of nature, but grins in the imagined solitude of our secret chambers. O! my son, it is for the young men of the present day that I tremble—seduced by a temporary success of a few children of fortune, I have observed that their minds reel from the prospects which are held forth by the ordinary, and mark me—by the *only* modes of acquiring property—fair trade, and honourable professions. It is for you and your companions that I fear. God grant! that there may not be a moral as well as political disorganization! God grant! that our youth, the hope of our state, may not be lost to us! For, O! my son, the wisest of us said—'He that maketh haste to be rich, shall be innocent.' Let us step into Clark's and see an ice."

BOOK THE SECOND.

CHAPTER I.

THE MARQUESS OF CARABAS.

THE Marquess of Carabas started in life as the det of a noble family. The earl, his father, was the woodman in the fairy tale, was blessed with three sons—the first was an idiot, and was destined for the coronet; the second was a man of business, and was educated for the commons; the third was a *roué*, and was shipped to the colonies.

The present marquess, then the Honourable Sidney Lorraine, prospered in his political career. He was servile and pompous, and indefatigable, and talkative—he whispered the world:—his friends used him as a scape, a courtier and a sage, a man of business and an orator. After revelling in his *late* professions of commissionerships, and other secretarieships, and the rest of the milk and honey of the political Canaan, the apex of the pyramid of his ambition was at length visible, for Sidney Lorraine became president of a board, and was rigged into the adylum of the cabinet.

At this moment his idiot brother died. To compensate for his loss of office, and to secure his vote, the Earl of Carabas was promoted in the peerage, and was presented with some magnificent office—meaning nothing, swelling with dignity, and void of duties. As years rolled on, various changes took place in the administration, of which his lordship was once a component part; and the ministry, to their surprise, getting popular, found that the command of the Carabas interest was not of such vital importance to them as heretofore, and so his lordship was voted a bore, and got shelved. Not that his lordship was bereaved of his splendid office, or that any thing occurred, indeed, by which the *uninitiated* might have been led to suppose that the beams of his lordship's consequence were shorn; but the marquess's secret applications at the treasury were no longer listened to; and pert under secretaries settled their cravats, and whispered "that the Carabas interest was gone by."

The most noble marquess was not insensible to his situation, for he was what the world calls *ambitious*; but the vigour of his faculties had vanished beneath the united influence of years and indolence and ill-humour; for his lordship, to avoid *ennui*, had quarrelled with his son, and then having lost his only friend, had quarrelled with himself.

Such was the distinguished individual who graced, one day at the latter end of the season of 18—, the classic board of Horace Grey, Esquire. The reader will, perhaps, be astonished, that such a man as his lordship, should be the guest of such a man as our hero's father; but the truth is, the Marquess of Carabas had just been disappointed in an attempt on the chair of the president of the Royal Society; which, for want of something better to do, he was ambitious of filling, and this was a conciliatory visit to one of the most distinguished members of that body, and one who had voted against him with particular enthusiasm. The marquess, still a politician, was now as he imagined, securing his host's vote for a future St. George's day.

The *cuisine* of Mr. Grey was *superbe*; for although an enthusiastic advocate for the cultivation of the mind, he was an equally ardent supporter of the cultivation of the body. Indeed, the necessary dependence of the sanity of the one on the good keeping of the other, was one of his most favourite theories, and one which this day he was supporting with very pleasant and facetious reasonings. His lordship was delighted with his new friend, and still more delighted with his new friend's theory. The marquess himself was, indeed, quite of the same opinion as Mr. Grey; for he never made a speech without previously taking a sandwich, and would have sunk under the estimates a thousand times, had it not been for the juicy friendship of the fruit of Portugal.

The guests were not numerous. A regius professor of Greek; an officer just escaped from Sockatoo; a man of science, and two M. P.s, with his lordship, the host, and Mr. Vivian Grey, constituted the party. O, no! there were two others. There was a Mr. John Brown, a fashionable poet, and who, ashamed of his own name, published his melodies under the more euphonious and romantic title of "*Clarence Devonshire*," and there was a Mr. Thomas Smith, a fashionable



novelist; that is to say, a person who occasionally publishes three volumes, one half of which contain the adventures of a young gentleman in the country; and the other volume and a half the adventures of the same young gentleman in the metropolis;—a sort of writer, whose constant tattle about beer and billiards, and eating soup, and the horror of “committing” puns, gives truly a most admirable and accurate idea of the conversation of the refined society of the refined metropolis of Great Britain. These two last gentlemen were “pets” of Mrs. Grey.

The conversation may be conceived. Each person was of course prepared with a certain quota of information, without which no name in London is morally entitled to *dine out*; and when the quota was expended, the amiable host took the burden upon his own shoulders, and endeavoured, as the phrase goes, “to draw out” his guests.

O, London dinners! empty artificial nothings! and that beings can be found, and those too the flower of the land, who, day after day and day after day, can act the same parts in the same dull, dreary farce! The officer had discoursed sufficiently about “his intimate friend, the Soudan,” and about the chain armour of the Sockatoo cuirassiers; and one of the M. P.s, who was in the guards, had been defeated in a ridiculous attempt to prove, that the breast-plates of the household troops of Great Britain were superior to those of the household troops of Tintomtantomtoo. Mrs. Grey, to whose opinion both parties deferred, gave it in favour of the Soudan. And the man of science had lectured about a machine which might destroy fifteen square feet of human beings in a second, and yet be carried in the waistcoat pocket. And the *classique*, who, for a professor, was quite a man of the world, had the latest news of the new Herculeum process, and was of opinion that, if they could but succeed in unrolling a certain suspicious-looking scroll, we might be so fortunate as to possess a minute treatise on &c., &c. In short, all had said their say. There was a dead pause, and Mrs. Grey looked at her husband and rose.

How singular it is, that when this move takes place every one appears to be relieved, and yet every one of any experience, must be aware that the *dead bore* work is only about to commence. Howbeit, all filled their glasses, and the peer at the top of the table, began to talk politics. I am sure that I cannot tell what the weighty subject was that was broached by the ex-minister; for I did not dine with Grey that day; and had I done so, I should have been equally ignorant; for I’m a dull man, and always sleep at dinner. However the subject was political, the claret flew round, and a stormy argument commenced. The marquess was decidedly wrong, and was sadly badgered by the civil M. P. and the professor. The host, who was of no party, supported his guest as long as possible, and then left him to his fate. The military M. P. fled to the drawing-room to philiander with Mrs. Grey; and the man of science and the African had already retired to the intellectual idiom of a May fair “at home.” The novelist was silent, for he was studying a scene—and the poet was absent, for he was *musé* a sonnet.

The marquess refuted, had recourse to contradiction, and was too acute a man to be insensible to the *forlornness* of his situation; when, at this

moment, a voice proceeded from the end table, from a young gentleman, who had preserved a profound silence, but whose if the company were to have judged from tones of his voice, and the matter of his communication, did not altogether proceed from want of confidence in his own abilities. “In my opinion,” said Mr. Vivian Grey, as he sat in his father’s vacated seat—“in my opinion lordship has been misunderstood; and it is generally the case, from a slight verbal misapprehension in the commencement of this argument the whole of this difference arises.”

The eyes of the marquess sparkled—and the mouth of the marquess was closed. He was lighted that his reputation might yet be saved; but as he was not perfectly acquainted how salvation was to be effected, he prudently kept battle to his youthful companion.

Mr. Vivian Grey proceeded with the utmost *froid*: he commented upon expressions, and subtilized words, insinuated opinions, and quoted a whole passage of Bolingbroke to that the opinion of the most noble the Marquis Carabas was one of the soundest, wisest, and convincing of opinions that ever was promulgated by mortal man. The tables were turned, guests looked astounded, the marquess set his ruffles, and perpetually exclaimed, “*Exactly I meant!*” and his opponents, full of wine quite puzzled, gave up.

It was a rule with Vivian Grey, never to advance any opinion *as his own*. He had been deep a student of human nature, not to be so that the opinions of a boy of twenty, however sound, and however correct, stood but a chance of being adopted by his elder, the feeble, fellow-creatures. In attaining any end was therefore his system always to advance opinion as that of some eminent and considerate personage; and when, under the sanction of name, the opinion or advice was entertained, Vivian Grey had no fear that he could prove its correctness and its expediency. He possessed also the singular faculty of being able to *improvise quotations*, that is, he could unmeditatedly clothe his conceptions in language characteristic of the style of any particular author; and Vivian Grey was reputed in the world as having the most astonishing memory that existed; for there was scarcely a subject of discussion in which he did not gain the victory, the great names he enlisted on his side of the argument. His father was aware of the existence of this dangerous faculty, and had often struggled with his son on the use of it. On the present occasion, when the buzz had somewhat subsided, Mr. Grey looked smiling to his son, and said: “Vivian, my dear, can you tell me the work of Bolingbroke I can find the eloquent sage you have just quoted?”—“Ask Mr. Hargrave,” replied the son, with the most perfect ease; then turning to the member: “You know Mr. Hargrave, you are reputed the most profound political student in the House, and more intimate acquainted than any other person with the works of Bolingbroke.”

Mr. Hargrave knew no such thing;—but was a weak man, and seduced by the complaisance he was afraid to prove himself unworthy of by confessing his ignorance of the passage.

as announced.

did not let the peer escape him in the room. He soon managed to enter into conversation with him; and certainly the Marquess never found a more entertaining companion. Vivian discoursed on a new Venetian tapestry, taught the marquess how to mull, the operation of which the marquess had never heard of, (and who has!) and then the flood of small, and little, innocent personalities, and comments so exquisitely introduced, that they appeared to be compliments; and so pleasant and conciliating, and the result of the marquess's own speech! and the full art of which the marquess was not aware, which, during all this time, the lively, amusing, elegant conversationist, so full of politics, and cookery, did not so much resemble Mr. Vivian Grey as the Marquess of himself.

"I must be gone," said the fascinated peer, who really had not felt in such spirits for many years; "I almost fear I have been vulgar to-day, but be amusing, eh! eh! eh!—but you are sad fellows, eh! eh! eh!—Don't dwell on me—good evening! and Mr. Vivian Grey!" said his lordship, "you'll not forget the receipt you promised me for making tomahawk punch."

"I'll not, my lord," said the young man; "must be invented first," thought Vivian, as he left him to retire. But never mind,

'Chapeau bas! chapeau bas!
Adieu au Marquis de Carabas!'

CHAPTER II.

THE RECEIPT.

Days after the dinner at Mr. Grey's, as the Marquess of Carabas was sitting in his library, engaged in the fulness of his ennui, as he sat at his large library-table, once triply covered with newspapers, communications, now thinly besprinkled with parliamentary paper or two, his accounts, and a few letters from some tenants, Mr. Vivian Grey was an-

swering an intruder on your lordship, but I do not refrain from bringing you the receipt."

"Happy to see ye, most happy to see ye." exactly the correct receipt, my lord. TWO BOTTLES OF STILL CHAMPAGNE, OF CURACOA." The peer's eyes glistened with his companion proceeded; "ONE PINT OF BRANDY; CATCH THE AROMA OF A POUND OF SUGAR, AND DASH THE WHOLE WITH GLEN-

DALE!" ejaculated the marquess.

At this point, however, which it is impossible to catch the receipt, is catching the aroma of a genius is your lordship's gastrical

re-ejaculated the marquess; "Ladenius."

"My lord! I shall be most happy to bring you the first concoction for you; and

remember particularly," said Vivian, rising, "remember it must be iced."

"Certainly, my dear fellow: but pray, don't think of going yet."

"I am very sorry, my lord, but such a pressure of engagements, your lordship's kindness is so great, and, really, I fear, that at this moment especially, your lordship can scarcely be in a humour for my trifling."

"Why this moment especially, Mr. Vivian Grey?"

"O, my lord! I am perfectly aware of your lordship's talents for business; but still I had conceived, that the delicate situation in which your lordship is now placed, requiring such anxious attention, such—"

"Delicate situation! anxious attention! why man! you speak riddles. I certainly have a great deal of business to transact: people are so obstinate, or so foolish, they will consult me, certainly, and certainly I feel it my duty, Mr. Vivian Grey,—I feel it the duty, sir, of every peer in this happy country (here his lordship got parliamentary;)—yes, sir, I feel it due to my character, to my family, —to—to—to assist with my advice, all those who think fit to consult me." Splendid peroration.

"O, my lord," carelessly remarked Vivian, "I thought it was a mere *on dit*."

"Thought what, my dear sir, you really quite perplex me."

"I mean to say, my lord—I, I thought it was impossible the overtures had been made."

"Overtures, Mr. Vivian Grey?"

"Yes, my lord! Overtures—hasn't your lordship seen the Post?—but I knew it was impossible;—I said so—"

"Said what, Mr. Vivian Grey?"

"Said that the whole paragraph was unfounded."

"Paragraph! what paragraph?" and his lordship rose and rang the library bell with a vehemence worthy of a marquess—"Sadler, bring me the Morning Post."

The servant entered with the paper: Mr. Vivian Grey seized it from his hands before it reached the marquess, and glancing his eye over it, with the rapidity of lightning, doubled up the sheet in a convenient readable form, and pushing it into his lordship's hands, exclaimed, "There my lord! there, that will explain all."

His lordship read:—

"We are informed that some alteration in the composition of the present administration is in contemplation; Lord Past Century, it is said, will retire; Mr. Liberal Principles will have the—; and Mr. Charlattin Gas the—. A noble peer, whose practised talents have already benefited the nation; and who, on vacating his seat in the cabinet, was elevated in the peerage, is reported as having had certain overtures made him, the nature of which may be conceived; but which, under the present circumstances, it would be indelicate in us to hint at."

It would have been impossible for a hawk to have watched its quarry with eyes of more fixed and anxious earnestness, than did Vivian Grey the Marquess of Carabas, as his lordship's eyes wandered over the paragraph. Vivian drew his chair close to the table opposite to the marquess, and when the paragraph was read, their eyes met.

"Utterly untrue," whispered the peer, with an

agitated voice, and with a countenance which, for a moment, seemed intellectual. "But why Mr. Vivian Grey should deem the fact of such overtures having been made '*impossible*,' I confess, astonishes me."

"*Impossible*, my lord!"

"Ay, Mr. Grey, *impossible*; that was your word."

"O, my lord! what should I know about these matters?"

"Nay, nay, Mr. Grey, something must have been floating in your mind—why *impossible*, why *impossible*? Did your father think so?"

"My father! O no! he never thinks about these matters; ours is not a political family; I'm not sure that he ever looks at a newspaper."

"But, my dear Mr. Grey, you would not have used the word without some meaning. Why did you think it impossible? *impossible* is such a peculiar word." And here the marquess looked up with great earnestness to a portrait of himself, which hung over the fire-place. It was one of Sir Thomas's happiest efforts; but it was not the happiness of the likeness, nor the beauty of the painting, which now attracted his lordship's attention; he thought only of the costume in which he appeared in that portrait—the *court dress of a cabinet minister*:—"Impossible, Mr. Grey, you must confess, is a very peculiar word," reiterated his lordship.

"I said *impossible*, my lord, because I *did* conceive, that had your lordship been of a disposition to which such overtures might have been made with any *probability* of success, the Marquess of Carabas would have been in a situation which would have precluded the *possibility* of those overtures being made at all."

"Hah!" and the marquess nearly started from his seat.

"Yes, my lord, I am a young, an inexperienced young man, ignorant of the world's ways; doubtless I was wrong, but I have much to learn," and his voice faltered; "but I did conceive, that having power at his *command*, the Marquess of Carabas did not exercise it, merely because he despised it:—but what should I know of such matters, my lord?"

"Is power a thing so *easily* to be despised, young man?" asked the marquess. His eye rested on a vote of thanks from the "Merchants and Bankers of London to the Right Honourable Sidney Lorraine, President, &c. &c. &c.," which, splendidly emblazoned, and gilt, and framed, and glazed, was suspended opposite the president's portrait.

"O no! my lord, you do mistake me," eagerly burst forth Vivian, "I am no cold-blooded philosopher, that would despise *that* for which, in my opinion, men, *real* men, should alone exist. Power! O! what sleepless nights, what days of hot anxiety! what exertions of mind and body! what travel! what hatred! what fierce encounters! what dangers of all possible kinds, would I not endure with a joyous spirit to gain it! but such, my lord, I thought were feelings peculiar to inexperienced young men; and seeing you, my lord, so situated that you might command *all* and *every thing*, and yet living as you *do*, I was naturally led to believe that the object of my adoration was a vain glittering bauble, which those who could possess knew the utter worthlessness of."

The peer sat in a musing mood, playing the

devil's tattoo on the library table; at last he raised his eyes from the French varnish, and said to Vivian in a low whisper, "Are you so certain that I can command *all* and *every thing*?"

"*All* and *every thing*! Did I say *all* and *every thing*? Really, my lord, you scan my expressions so critically; but I see your lordship is smiling at my boyish nonsense! and really I feel that I have already wasted too much of your lordship's valuable time, and displayed too much of my own ignorance."

"My dear sir, I am not aware that I was smiling."

"O! your lordship is so very kind."

"But, my dear sir! you are really labouring under a very great mistake. I am desirous, I am *particularly* desirous, of having your opinion upon this subject."

"My opinion, my lord! what would *my* opinion be but an echo of the circle in which I live, but a faithful representation of the feelings of general society."

"And, Mr. Grey, I should be glad to know what can possibly be more interesting to me than a faithful representation of the feelings of general society on this subject."

"The many, my lord, are not *always* right."

"Mr. Grey, the many are not often wrong. Come, my dear sir, do me the favour of being frank, and let me know why the public is of opinion that *all* and *every thing* is in my power; for such, after all, *were* your words."

"If I did use them, my lord, it was because I was thinking, as I often am, what after all in this country is public life! Is it not a race in which the swiftest must surely win the prize—and is not that *prize power*?—Has not your lordship treasure? There is your moral steam which can work the world. Has not your lordship treasure's most splendid consequences, pure blood and aristocratic influence! The millionaire has in his possession the seeds of every thing, but he must wait for half a century till his descendant finds himself in your lordship's state—till he is *yclept* noble, and then he starts fair in the grand course. All these advantages your lordship has apparently at hand, with the additional advantage (and one, O! how great!) of having already proved to your country, that you know *how* to rule."

There was a dead silence, which at length the marquess broke. "There is *much* in what you say; but I cannot conceal it from myself, I have no wish to conceal it from you—I *am* not *what I was*."—O! ambition! thou art the parent of truth.

"Ah, my lord!" eagerly rejoined Vivian, "here is the terrible error into which you great statesmen have always fallen. Think you not that *intelled* is as much a purchasable article as fine parks and fair castles! With your lordship's tried and splendid talents, *every thing* might be done; but, in my opinion, if, instead of a practised, an experienced and warm statesman, I was now addressing an *idiot earl*, I should not see that the great end might not equally be consummated."

"Say you so, my merry man, and how?"

"Why, my lord,—but,—but, I feel that I am trespassing on your lordship's time, otherwise I think I could show *why* society is of opinion that your lordship can do *all* and *every thing*—how indeed your lordship might in a very short time be—prime minister."

"No, Mr. Grey;—this conversation must be

inished, I'll first give orders that we may not be disturbed! and then we'll proceed immediately. Come, now, your manner takes me, and we will converse in the spirit of the most perfect confidence."

Here as the marquess settled at the same time in chair and his countenance, and looked as anxious as if majesty itself was consulting him on the formation of a ministry, in burst the marchioness, notwithstanding all the remonstrances, entreaties, breaths, and supplications of Mr. Sadler.

Her ladyship had been what they style a *splendid woman*; she was now *passata*, although with the aid of cashmeres, diamonds, turbans, her *tout ensemble* was still very striking. Her ladyship was not remarkable for any thing; save a correct taste in poodles, parrots, and bijouterie; and a proper admiration of Theodore Hook and John Bull.

"O! marquess," exclaimed her ladyship—and a favourite green parrot, which came flying in after its accustomed perch, her ladyship's left shoulder, bricked at the same time in concert—"O! marquess, my poor Julie! You know we've noticed how nervous she has been for some days past, and had just given her a saucer of arrow-root and milk, and she seemed a little easier, and I said to Miss Graves, 'I really do think she is a *little* better,' and Miss Graves said, 'Yes, my lady, I hope she is;' when just as we flattered ourselves that the dear little creature was enjoying a quiet sleep, Miss Graves called out, 'O, my lady! my lady! Julie's in a fit!' and when I turned round she was fling on her back, kicking, with her eyes shut." And here the marchioness detected Mr. Grey, and gave him as fashionable a stare as might be expected from a lady patroness of Almacks'.

"The marchioness—Mr. Vivian Grey—my love, I assure you we're engaged in a most important, a most——"

"O! my life, I wouldn't disturb you for the world, only if you will just tell me what you think ought to be done; leeches, or a warm bath, or shall send for Doctor Blue Pill?"

The marquess looked a little annoyed, as if he wished her ladyship—in her own room again. He was almost meditating a general reprimand, except that his grave young friend should have witnessed this frivolous intrusion, when that accomplished stripling, to the astonishment of the future minister, immediately recommended "the warm bath," and a few grains of "mustard seed," and then lectured with equal rapidity and erudition, on clogs and all diseases in general.

The marchioness retired, "easier in her mind about Julie than she had been for some days." Vivian assured her "that it was not apoplexy, but only the first symptom of an epidemic." And as she retired, she murmured her gratitude most respectfully to Julie's young physician; and her time minister, the parrot, on her left shoulder, at the same time cackled a compliment.

"Now, Mr. Grey," said his lordship, endeavouring to recover his dignity, "we were discussing the public sentiments, you know, on a certain point, when this unfortunate interruption——"

Vivian had not much difficulty in collecting his senses, and he proceeded, not as displeased as his lordship with the domestic scene.

"I need not remind your lordship, that the two great parties into which this state is divided, are apparently very unequally proportioned. Your

lordship well knows how the party to which your lordship is *said* to belong, your lordship knows, I imagine, how that is constituted. We have nothing to do with the *other*. My lord, I must speak out. No thinking man—and such, I trust, Vivian Grey is,—no *thinking* man can for a moment suppose, that your lordship's heart is *very warm* in the cause of a party which—for I will not mince my words—*has betrayed you*. How is it, it is asked by *thinking* men, how is it that the Marquess of Carabas is—the *tool* of a faction?"

The marquess breathed loud; "They say so, do they?"

"Why, my lord, listen even to your servants in your own hall—need I say more! How then! is this opinion true! Let us look to your conduct to the party to which you are *said* to belong. Your votes are theirs, your influence is theirs; and for all this, what return, my lord marquess, what return! My lord, I am not rash enough to suppose that your lordship, *alone and unsupported*, can make yourself the arbiter of this country's destinies. It would be ridiculous to entertain such an idea for a second. The existence of such a man would not be endured by the nation for a *second*. But, my lord, *union is strength*. Nay, my lord, start not—I am not going to advise you to throw yourself into the arms of opposition; leave such advice for greenhorns. I am not going to advise you to adopt a line of conduct, which would for a moment compromise the consistency of your high character; leave such advice for fools. My lord, it is to preserve your consistency, it is to vindicate your high character, it is to make the Marquess of Carabas perform the duties which society requires from him, that I, Vivian Grey, a member of that society, and an humble friend of your lordship, speak so boldly."

"My friend," said the agitated peer, "you cannot speak *too* boldly. My mind opens to you. I have felt, I have long felt, that I was not what I ought to be, that I was not what society requires me to be;—but where is your remedy, what is the line of conduct that I should pursue?"

"The remedy, my lord! I never conceived for a moment, that there was any doubt of the existence of means to attain *all and every thing*. I think that was your lordship's phrase. I only hesitated as to the existence of the *inclination* on the part of your lordship."

"You cannot doubt it *now*," said the peer in a low voice; and then his lordship looked anxiously round the room, as if he feared that there had been some mysterious witness to his whisper.

"My lord," said Vivian, and he drew his chair close to the marquess, "the plan is shortly this. There are others in a similar situation with yourself. All *thinking* men know—your lordship knows still better—that there are others equally influential—equally ill treated. How is it that I see no concert among these individuals! How is it that, jealous of each other, or each trusting that he may ultimately prove an exception to the system of which he is a victim; how is it, I say, that you look with cold hearts on each other's situations! My lord marquess, it is at the head of these that I would place you—it is these that I would have act with you—and this is the *union* which is strength."

"You are right, you are right; there is Courtown, but we do not speak. There is Beaconfield, but we are not intimate,—but much might be done."

"My lord, you must not be daunted at a few difficulties, or at a little exertion. But as for Courtown or Beaconsfield, or fifty other offended men; if it can be shown to them that their interest is to be your lordship's friend, trust me, that ere six months are over, they will have plodged their troth. Leave all this to me—give me your lordship's name," said Vivian, whispering most earnestly in the marquess's ear, and laying his hand upon his lordship's arm—"give me your lordship's name, and your lordship's influence, and I will take upon myself the whole organization of the CARABAS' PARTY."

"The Carabas party!—Ah! we must think more of this."—

The marquess's eyes smiled with triumph, as he shook Vivian cordially by the hand, and begged him to call upon him on the morrow.

CHAPTER III.

THE MOTTO.

THE intercourse between the marquess and Vivian, after this interview, was constant. No dinner party was thought perfect at Carabas House, without the presence of the young gentleman; and as the marchioness was delighted with the perpetual presence of an individual whom she could always consult about Julie, there was apparently no domestic obstacle to Vivian's remaining in high favour.

The Earl of Eglamour, the only child, in whom were concentrated all the hopes of the illustrious house of Lorraine, was in Italy. The only remaining member of the domestic circle who was wanting, was the Honourable Mrs. Felix Lorraine, the wife of the marquess's younger brother. This lady, exhausted by the gayety of the season, had left town somewhat earlier than she usually did, and was inhaling fresh air, and of course studying botany, at the magnificent seat of the Carabas family, CHATEAU DESIR, at which splendid place Vivian was to pass the summer.

Mr. Grey watched the movements of his son with an anxious, but apparently with no curious eye. "If the marquess will give my son a good place, why Master Vivian's new system works rather better than I conceived it would, but how the young knave hath so—managed, shall I say!—the old fool, does, I profess, puzzle my philosophy."

Alas! when Mr. Grey jocosely used the phrase, "*new system*," he was little aware of the workings of his son's mind. But so it is in life; a father is, perhaps, the worst judge of his son's capacity. He knows too much—and too little.

In the mean time, as we before stated, all was sunshine with Vivian Grey. His noble friend and himself were in perpetual converse, and constantly engaged in deep consultation. As yet, the world knew nothing, except that, according to the Marquess of Carabas, "Vivian Grey was the most astonishingly clever and prodigiously accomplished fellow that ever breathed." And as the marquess always added, "resembled himself very much when he was young."

But it must not be supposed, that Vivian was 'o all the world the fascinating creature that he

was to the Marquess of Carabas. Many complained that he was reserved, silent, satirical, and haughty. But the truth was, Vivian Grey often asked himself, "who is to be my enemy to-morrow!" He was too cunning a master of the human mind, not to be aware of the quicksands upon which all greenhorns strike; he knew too well the danger of *unnecessary intimacy*. A SKILL FOR A FRIEND, AND A SNEER FOR THE WORLD, is the way to govern mankind, and such was the motto of Vivian Grey.

CHAPTER IV.

CHATEAU DESIR.

How shall I describe CHATEAU DESIR, that place fit for all princes? In the midst of a park of great extent, and eminent for scenery, as varied as might please nature's most capricious lover; in the midst of green lawns, and deep winding glens, and cooling streams, and wild forests, and soft woodland, there was gradually formed an elevation, on which was situate a mansion of great size, and of that bastard, but picturesque style of architecture, called the Italian Gothic. The date of its erection was about the middle of the sixteenth century. You entered by a noble gateway, in which the pointed style still predominated, but in various parts of which, the Ionic column, and the prominent key-stone, and other creations of Roman architecture, intermingled with the expiring Gothic, into a large quadrangle, to which the square casement windows, and the triangular pediments or gable ends, supplying the place of battlements, gave a varied and Italian feature. In the centre of the court, from an immense marble basin, the rim of which was enriched by a splendid sculptured lotus border, rose a marble group, representing Amphitrite with her marine attendants, whose sounding shells, and coral sceptres sent forth their subject element in sparkling showers. This work, the *chef d'œuvre* of a celebrated artist of Vicenza, had been purchased by Valerian, first Lord Carabas, who having spent the greater part of his life as the representative of his monarch at the ducal court of Venice, at length returned to his native country; and in the creation of Chateau Desir, endeavoured to find some consolation for the loss of his gay palazzo on the banks of the Adige.

Over the gateway there rose a turreted tower, the small square window of which, notwithstanding its stout stanchions, illumined the inaurient room of the House of Carabas. In the spandrels of the gateway, and in many other parts of the building, might be seen the arms of the family, while the innumerable stacks of chimneys, which appeared to spring from all parts of the roof, were carved and built in such curious and quaint devices, that they were rather an ornament than an excrescence. When you entered the quadrangle, you found one side solely occupied by the old hall, the immense carved rafters of whose oaken roof rested on corbels of the family supporters, against the walls.

The walls of the hall were of stone, but these were covered halfway from the ground with a panelling of curiously carved oak: whence were suspended the family portraits in massy frames, painted partly by Dutch, and partly by Italian

artists. Near the *dais*, or upper part of the hall, there projected an oriel window, which, as you beheld, you scarcely knew what most to admire, the radiancy of its painted panes, or the fantastic richness of Gothic ornament, which was profusely lavished in every part of its masonry. Here, too, the Gothic pendant, and the Gothic fanwork, were intermingled with the Italian arabesques, which, at the time of the building of the chateau, had been recently introduced into England by Hans Holbein and John of Padua.

How wild and fanciful are those ancient arabesques! Here at Chateau Desair, in the panelling of the old hall, might you see fantastic scrolls, separated by bodies ending in *termini*, and whose heads supported the Ionic volute, while the arch, which appeared to spring from these capitals, had, for a keystone, heads more monstrous than those of the fabled animals of Ctesias; or so ludicrous, that you forgot the classic griffin in the grotesque conception of the Italian artist. Here was a gibbering monkey, there a grinning pulcinello; now you viewed a chattering devil, which might have figured in the temptation of St. Anthony; and now a mournful, mystic, bearded countenance, which might have fitted in the back scene of a Witch's Sabbath.

A long gallery wound through the upper story of two other sides of the quadrangle, and beneath were the show suite of apartments, with a sight of which the admiring eyes of curious tourists were occasionally delighted.

The gray stone walls of this antique edifice were, in many places, thickly covered with ivy, and other parasitical plants, the deep green of whose verdure beautifully contrasted with the scarlet glories of the papyrus japonica, which gracefully clustered round the windows of the lower chambers. The mansion itself was immediately surrounded by numerous ancient forest trees. There was the elm with its rich branches, bending down like clustering grapes; there was the wide-spreading oak, with its roots fantastically gnarled; there was the ash, with its smooth bark and elegant leaf; and the silver beech, and the gracile birch, and the dark fir, affording, with its rough foliage, a contrast to the trunks of its more beautiful companions, or shooting far above their branches with the spirit of freedom worthy of a rough child of the mountains.

Around the castle were extensive pleasure-grounds, which realized the romance of the gardens of Verulam. And truly, as you wandered through their enchanting paths, there seemed no end to their various beauties, and no exhaustion of their perpetual novelty. Green retreats succeeded to winding walks; from the shady *berceau*, you vaulted on the noble terrace; and, if for an instant you felt wearied by treading the velvet lawn, you might rest in a mossy cell, while your mind was soothed by the soft music of falling waters. Now your curious eyes were greeted by oriental animals, basking in a sunny paddock; and when you turned from the white-footed antelope, and the dark-eyed gazelle, you viewed an aviary of such extent, that within its trellised walls the imprisoned songsters could build in the free branches of a tree, their natural nests.

"O, fair scene!" thought Vivian Grey, as he approached on a fine summer's afternoon, the splendid chateau. "O, fair scene! doubly fair to

those who quit for *you* the thronged and agitated city. And can it be, that those who exist within this enchanted domain, can think of any thing but sweet air, and do ought but revel in the breath of perfumed flowers?" And here he gained the garden gate: so he stopped his soliloquy and gave his horse to his groom.

CHAPTER V.

A NEW CHARACTER.

THE marquess had preceded Vivian in his arrival about three or four days, and of course, to use the common phrase, the establishment "was quite settled." It was, indeed, to avoid the possibility of witnessing the domestic arrangements of a nobleman in any other point of view save that of perfection, that Vivian had declined accompanying his noble friend to the chateau. Mr. Grey, junior, was an epicurean, and all epicureans will quite agree with me, that his conduct on this head was extremely wise. I am not very nice myself about these matters; but there are, we all know, a thousand little things that go wrong on the *arrivals* of even the best regulated families, and to mention no others, for any rational being voluntarily to encounter the awful gaping of an English family, who have travelled one hundred miles in ten successive hours, appears to me to be little short of madness.

"Grey, my boy, quite happy to see ye!—later than I expected; first bell rings in five minutes—Sadler will show you my room—father, I hope, quite well."

Such was the salutation of the marquess; and Vivian accordingly retired to arrange his toilet.

The first bell rang, and the second bell rang, and Vivian was seated at the dinner table. He bowed to the marchioness, and asked after her poodle, and gazed with some little curiosity at the vacant chair opposite him.

"Mrs. Felix Lorraine—Mr. Vivian Grey," said the marquess, as a lady entered the room.

Now, although I am one of those historians who are of opinion that the nature of the personages they celebrate, should be developed rather by a recital of their conduct, than by a set character *au commencement*; I feel it, nevertheless, incumbent on me to devote a few lines to the lady that has just entered, which the reader will be so good as to get through, while she is accepting an offer of some white soup: by this means he will lose none of the conversation.

The Honourable Felix Lorraine, we have before laconically described as a *roué*. To the initiated I need say no more; they will all know what sort of a person a *roué* must be, who has the honour of being the son of an English earl. To the uninitiated, I shall only observe, that after having passed through a career with tolerable credit, which would have blasted the character of any common personage, Felix Lorraine ended by pigeoning a young nobleman, whom for that purpose he had made his intimate friend. The affair got wind; after due examination, was proclaimed "*too bad*," and the guilty personage was visited with the heaviest vengeance of modern society—he was expelled his club. By this unfortunate exposure, Mr. Felix Lorraine was obliged to give

in a match, which was on the *tapis*, with the celebrated Miss Mexico, on whose million he had determined to set up a character and a chariot, and at the same time pension his mistress, and subscribe to the Society for the Suppression of Vice. Felix left for the continent, and in due time was made drum-major at Barbadoes, or fiscal at Ceylon, or something of that kind; I forget which. While he loitered in Europe, he made a conquest of the heart of the daughter of some German baron, who was ambassador extraordinary from his Serene Highness the Palgrave of to his most Supreme Excellency the Landgrave of and after six weeks passed in the most affectionate manner, each of the happy couple performing their respective duties with perfect propriety, Felix left for his colonial appointment, and also left—his lady behind him.

Mr. Lorraine had duly and dutifully informed his family of his marriage, and they as amiably and affectionately, had never answered his letters, which he never expected they would. Profiting by their example, he never answered his wife's, who, in due time, to the horror of the marquess, landed in England, and claimed the protection of her "beloved husband's family." The marquess vowed he would never see her; the lady, however, one morning gained admittance, and from that moment she had never quitted her brother-in-law's roof, and not only had never quitted it, but now made the greatest favour of her staying.

The extraordinary influence which Mrs. Felix Lorraine possessed, was certainly not owing to her beauty, for the lady opposite Vivian Grey had apparently no claims to admiration, on the score of her personal qualifications. Her complexion was bad, and her features were indifferent, and these characteristics were not rendered less uninterestingly conspicuous, by what makes an otherwise ugly woman *toute au contraire*, namely, a pair of expressive eyes; for certainly this epithet could not be applied to those of Mrs. Felix Lorraine, which gazed in all the vacancy of German listlessness.

The lady *did* bow to Mr. Grey, and that was all; and then she negligently spooned her soup, and then, after much parade, sent it away untouched. As Vivian dined with the marchioness, he was not under the necessity of paying any courtesy to his opposite neighbour, whose silence he plainly perceived was for the nonce, and consequently for him. But the day was hot, and Vivian had been fatigued by his ride, and the marquess's champagne was excellent; and so, at last, the floodgates of his speech burst, and talk he *did*. He complimented her ladyship's poodle, quoted German to Mrs. Felix Lorraine, and taught the marquess to eat cabinet pudding with Curacao sauce, (a custom which, by-the-by, I recommend to all;) and then his stories, and his scandal, and his sentiment;—stories for the marquess, scandal for the marchioness, and sentiment for the marquess's sister! That lady, who began to find out her man, had no mind to be longer silent, and although a perfect mistress of the English language, began to articulate a horrible *patois*, that she might not be mistaken for an English woman, a thing which she particularly dreaded. But now came her punishment, for Vivian saw the effect which he had produced on Mrs. Felix Lorraine, and that Mrs. Felix Lorraine now wished to produce a corresponding effect upon him, and this he was determined she

should not do; so new stories followed, and new compliments ensued, and finally he anticipated her sentences, and sometimes her thoughts. The lady sat silent and admiring! At last the important meal was finished, and the time came when good dull English dames retire; but of this habit Mrs. Felix Lorraine did not approve; and although she had not yet prevailed upon Lady Carabas to adopt her ideas on field days, still *ex domestique*, the good-natured marchioness had given in, and to save herself from hearing the din of male voices at a time at which during her whole life she had been unaccustomed to them, the Marchioness of Carabas—dozed. Her worthy spouse, who was prevented by the presence of Mrs. Felix Lorraine, from talking politics with Vivian, passed the bottle pretty briskly, and then conjecturing that "from the sunset we should have a fine day to-morrow," fell back in his easy chair, and—snored.

Mrs. Felix Lorraine looked at her noble relatives, and shrugged up her shoulders with an air which baffled all description. "Mr. Grey, I congratulate you on this hospitable reception; you see we treat you quite *en famille*. Come! 'tis a fine evening, you have seen, as yet, but little of Chateau Desir: we may as well enjoy the fine air on the terrace."

CHAPTER VI.

THE TERRACE.

"You must know, Mr. Grey, that this is my favourite walk, and I therefore expect that it will be yours."

"It cannot indeed fail to be such, the favourite as it alike is, of nature, and Mrs. Felix Lorraine."

"On my word, a very pretty sentence!—and who taught you, young gentleman, to bandy words so fairly?"

"I never can open my mouth, except in the presence of a woman," bolted out Vivian, with the most impudent mendacity, and he looked interesting and innocent.

"Indeed!—and what do you know about such wicked work as *talking to women*?" and here Mrs. Felix Lorraine imitated Vivian's sentimental voice. "Do you know," she continued, "I feel quite happy that you have come down here;—I begin to think that we shall be very great friends."

"Nothing appears to be more evident," said Vivian.

"How delicious is friendship," exclaimed Mrs. Felix Lorraine: "delightful sentiment, that prevents life from being a curse! Have you a friend, Mr. Vivian Grey?"

"Before I answer that question, I should like to know what meaning Mrs. Felix Lorraine attaches to that important monosyllable, *friend*."

"O, you want a definition! I hate definitions; and of all the definitions in the world, the one I've been most unfortunate in, has been a definition of friendship—I might say,"—and here her voice sunk,—"*I might say, of all the sentiments in the world, friendship is the one which has been most fatal to me; but I must not inoculate you with my bad spirits; bad spirits are not for young blood like yours, leave them to old persons like myself*."

"Old!" said Vivian, in a proper tone of surprise.

"Old! *ay old*;—how old do you think I am?"

ny have seen twenty summers," gazed Vivian.

looked pleased, and almost insinuated seen one or two more. Mrs. Felix is about thirty.

r woman," thought Vivian, "but vain; ow what to think of her."

ey, I fear you find me in bad spirits t, alas! I—I have cause. Although h other to-day for the first time, yet nothing in your manner, something in ion of your eyes, that make me believe ss is not altogether a matter of indifference." These words, uttered in one of at voices by which ever human being staid, were slowly and deliberately if it was intended that they should ear of the object to whom they were

ur Mrs. Lorraine! it is impossible that but one sentiment with regard to you,

d, Mr. Grey?"

itude for your welfare."

y gently took the arm of the young then with an agitated voice, and a rit, dwelt upon the unhappiness of her e cruelty of her fortunes. Her husband was the sorrowful theme of her is, and she ended by asking Mr. Vivian ce, as to the line of conduct which she sue with regard to him; first duly in- vian, that this was the *only* time, and person, to whom this subject had been ned.

hy should I mention it here—and to The marquess is the best of men, but—" ie looked up in Vivian's face, and spoke and the marchioness is the most amian- nen—at least, I suppose her lap-dog

ice of Vivian was very concise. He isband to the devil in two seconds, and on the wife's not thinking of him for ment, and then the lady dried her eyes, ed to do her best.

ow," said Mrs. Felix Lorraine, "I must your own affairs—I think your plan

madam."

lun, sir! The marquess has told me *all*. head for politics, Mr. Grey; but if I st you in managing the nation, I per- n managing the family, and my services r command. Believe me, you'll have do; there, I pledge you my troth. Do it a pretty hand?"

lid think it a very pretty hand, and he due courtesies in a very gallant style.

ow, good even to you," said the lady; gate leads to my apartments. You'll feulty in finding your way back;"—so disappeared.

CHAPTER VII.

EARLY RISING.

Vivian retired to his room, he found a in his dressing-case, which contained

two lines. They were as follows:—"A walk on the terrace before breakfast, is the fashion at Chateau Desir." The *esprit* of the note sufficiently indicated the authoress, even if the perfumed paper, and the diminutive French gam, with its piquant and *peculiar* motto, had allowed him for an instant to hesitate.

In spite of his travelling, and his champagne, and his sound sleep, Vivian rose early, and was on the terrace at a most reasonable hour, at least for him: Mrs. Felix Lorraine was already there.

"I congratulate Mr. Grey," said the lady, as she extended him a finger, "on being an early riser. Nothing is so vulgar as getting up late. O! what a pretty morning gown that is! and how nice your hair curls! and that velvet stock! why I declare you've quite a taste in *costume*! but it does not set quite right. *There*, that's better," said Mrs. Lorraine, adjusting the stock for him, "not much beard yet I see; you must take care to have one before you're a—*privy counsellor*."

"I rejoice," said Vivian, "that I can in return sincerely compliment you on your *own* good taste in costume. That buckle is, of course, fresh from Berlin, or—Birmingham—it's all the same you know at least at Howell and James's; and of all things in the world, what I must admire are your black velvet slippers! But where's the marquess?"

"O! we're not very early honoured with the presence of the Marquess of Carabas in his own house."

"Why, what do you mean?"

"O! I mean nothing, except that the future minister never rises till noon—bad habits, Mr. Grey, for a man of business!"

"Bad habits, indeed! we must endeavour to cure him, now that he is going, as you say, to be a man of business."

"O, certainly! cure him by all means. He'll give you, I don't doubt, plenty of occupation. I advise you regularly to reform the whole house. Your influence is so great, that you can do any thing with the marquess. Well, I hope he'll be- have better in *future*, for the castle will be full in a few days. There are the Courtowns coming, and Sir Berdmore and Lady Scrope, and the Beaconsfields—all next week; and crowds of all sorts of people, whose names I forget, pawns in the great game of chess which is to be played by Vivian Grey, Esq. and the most noble Marquess of Carabas—against all England. There, there's the breakfast bell; I hope your appetite's good."

CHAPTER VIII.

THE FIRST WEEK.

THE first week at Chateau Desir passed pleasantly enough. Vivian's morning was amply occupied in maturing with the marquess the grand principles of the new political system: in weighing interests, in balancing connexions and settling "what side was to be taken on the *great questions*?" O! politics, thou splendid juggle!—The whole business, although so magnificent in its result, appeared very easy to the two counsellors, for it was one of the first principles of Mr. Vivian Grey, "that every thing was possible." Men did fail in life to be sure, and after all, very little was

done by the generality; but still all these failures, and all this inefficiency might be traced to a want of physical and mental courage. Some men were bold in their conceptions, and splendid heads at a grand system, but then, when the day of battle came, they turned out very cowards; while others, who had nerve enough to stand the brunt of the hottest fire, were utterly ignorant of military tactics, and fell before the destroyer, like the brave untutored Indians before the civilized European. Now Vivian Grey was conscious, that there was at least *one* person in the world who was no craven either in body or in mind, and so he had long come to the comfortable conclusion, that it was impossible that his career could be any thing but the most brilliant. And truly, employed as he now was, with a peer of the realm, in a solemn consultation on that realm's most important interests, at a time when creatures of his age were moping in halls and colleges, is it to be wondered at, that he began to imagine that his theory was borne out by experience and by fact! Not that it must be supposed, even for a moment, that Vivian Grey was what the world calls *conceited*. O, no! he knew the measure of his own mind, and had fathomed the depth of his powers with equal skill and impartiality; but in the process he could not but feel, that he *could* conceive *much*, and *dare* do *more*.

I said the first week at Chateau Desir passed pleasantly enough, and so it did, for Vivian's soul revelled in the morning councils on his future fortunes, with as much eager joy, as a young courser trying the turf preliminary to running for the plate. And then, in the evening, were moonlit walks with Mrs. Felix Lorraine! and then the lady abused England so prettily, and initiated her companion into all the secrets of German courts, and sang beautiful French songs, and then she would take him beside the luminous lake in the park, and vow it looked just like the dark blue Rhine! and then she remembered Germany, and grew sad, and abused her husband; and then she taught Vivian the guitar, and—some other fooleries besides.

CHAPTER IX.

TACTICS.

THE second week of Vivian's visit had come round, and the flag waved proudly on the proud tower of Chateau Desir, indicating to the admiring country, that the most noble Sidney, Marquess of Carabas, held public days twice a week at his grand castle. And now came the neighbouring peer, full of grace and gravity, and the mellow baronet, with his hearty laugh, and the jolly country squire, and the middling gentry, and the jobbing country attorney, and the flourishing country surveyor. Some honouring by their presence, some who felt the obligation equal, and others bending before the noble host, as if paying him adoration was almost an equal pleasure with that of guzzling his venison pasties and quaffing his bright wines.

Independent of all these periodical visitors, the house was full of permanent ones. There was the Viscount and Viscountess Courtown, and their three daughters, and Lord and Lady Beaconsfield,

and their three sons, and Sir Berdmore and Lady Scrope, and Colonel Delmington of the guards, and Lady Louisa Manvers, and her daughter Julia. Lady Louisa was the only sister of the marquess—a widow, proud and penniless.

To all these distinguished personages, Vivian was introduced by the marquess as a "monstrous clever young man, and his lordship's most particular friend"—and then the noble Carabas left the game in his young friend's hands.

And right well Vivian did his duty. In a week's time it would have been hard to decide with whom of the family of the Courtowns Vivian was the greatest favourite. He rode with the viscount, who was a good horseman, and was driven by his lady, who was a good whip; and when he had sufficiently admired the *tout ensemble* of her ladyship's pony phaeton, he intrusted her, "*in confidence*," with some ideas of his own about martingales, a subject which he assured her ladyship "had been the object of his mature consideration." The three honourable misses were the most difficult part of the business; but he talked sentiment with the first, sketched with the second, and romped with the third.

Ere the Beaconsfields could be jealous of the influence of the Courtowns, Mr. Vivian Grey had promised his lordship, who was a collector of medals, a unique, which had never yet been heard of; and her ladyship, who was a collector of autographs, the private letters of every man of genius who ever had been heard of. In this division of the Carabas' guests, he was not bored with a family, for *sons* he always made it a rule to cut dead; they are the members of a family who, on an average, are generally very uninfluential, *for*, on an average, they are fools enough to think it very knowing to be very disagreeable. So the wise man but little loves them; but woe to the fool who neglects the daughters!

Sir Berdmore Scrope, Vivian found a more unmanageable personage; for the baronet was confoundedly shrewd, and without a particle of sentiment in his composition. It was a great thing, however, to gain him; for Sir Berdmore was a leading country gentleman, and having quarrelled with ministers about the corn laws, had been accounted disaffected ever since. The baronet, however, although a bold man to the world, was luckily henpecked; so Vivian made love to the wife, and secured the husband.

CHAPTER X.

MARRIAGE.

I THINK that Julia Manvers was really the most beautiful creature that ever smiled in this fair world. Such a symmetrically formed shape, such perfect features, such a radiant complexion, such luxuriant auburn hair, and such blue eyes, lit up by a smile of such mind and meaning, have seldom blessed the gaze of admiring man! Vivian Grey, fresh as he was, was not exactly the creature to lose his heart very speedily. He looked upon marriage as a certain farce, in which, sooner or later, he was, as a well-paid actor, to play his part; and could it have advanced his views one jot, he would have married the Princess Caraboo to-morrow. He

All wives in the world, a young and handsome man was that which he most dreaded, and how a woman who was wedded to a beautiful woman, could possibly perform his duties to the public, did it exceedingly puzzle him. Notwithstanding, however, these sentiments, Vivian began to think there really could be no harm in talking to so useful a creature as Julia, and a little conversation with her, he felt, would be no displeasing offset to the difficult duties in which he was involved.

To the astonishment of the Honourable Buck-st Stanhope, eldest son of Lord Beaconsfield, Vivian Grey, who had never yet condescended to acknowledge his existence, asked him one morning, with the most fascinating of smiles, and with a most conciliating voice, "whether they should be together?" The young heir apparent looked at and assented. He arrived again at Chateau d' in a couple of hours, desperately enamoured of the eldest Miss Courtown. The sacrifice of two mornings to the Honourable Dormer Stanhope, and the Honourable Gregory Stanhope, sent him home equally *au desespoir* as to the remaining sisters. Having thus, like a man of honour, provided for the amusement of his former friends, three Miss Courtowns, Vivian left Mrs. Felix Courtown to the colonel, whose mustache, by-the-by, that lady considerably patronised, and then, being excited a universal feeling of gallantry among the elders, Vivian found his whole day at the service of Julia Manvera.

"Miss Manvera, I think that you and I are the only faithful subjects in this castle of indolence, where I am lounging on an ottoman, my ambition extending only so far as the possession of a cigar, some aromatic and circling wreaths, I candidly confess, I dare not here excite; and you, of course, rich too knowing to be doing any thing on the 1st of August, save dreaming of races, archery, and county balls—the three most delightful things which the country can boast, either for man, woman, or child."

"Of course, you except sporting for yourself—nothing especially, I suppose."

"Shooting! O! ah! there is such a thing. No, no shot;—not that I have not in my time hunted a Manton; but the truth is, having at an early age mistaken my most intimate friend for a cock pheasant, I sent a whole crowd of 'fours' to his face, and thereby spoilt one of the prettiest intonances in Christendom; so I gave up the d. Besides, as Tom Moore says, I have so much to do in the country, that, for my part, I fully have no time for killing birds and jumping over ditches. Good work enough for country squires, or must, like all others, have their hours of excitement. Mine are of a different nature, and at a different locality; and so when I come to the country, 'tis for pleasant air, and beautiful trees, and winding streams, things which, of course, those who live all the year round among, do not suspect to be lovely and adorable creations. Don't you agree with Tom Moore, Miss Manvera?"

"O, of course! but I think it's very improper, the habit, that every one has, of calling a man such eminence as the author of 'Lalla Rookh,' Tom Moore."

I wish he could but hear you! But, suppose me to quote Mr. Moore, or Mr. Thomas Moore,

would you have the most distant conception whom I meant? No, no, certainly not. By-the-by, did you ever hear the pretty name they gave him at Paris?"

"No! what was it?"

"One day, Moore and Rogers went to call on Denon. Rogers gave their names to the Swiss, *Monsieur Rogers et Monsieur Moore*. The Swiss dashed open the library door, and to the great surprise of the illustrious antiquary, announced *Monsieur l'Amour*! While Denon was doubting whether the god of love was really paying him a visit or not, Rogers entered. I should like to have seen Denon's face."

"And Monsieur Denon did take a portrait of Mr. Rogers as Cupid, I believe, Mr. Grey."

"Come, madam, no scandal about Queen Elizabeth, I hope. Mr. Rogers is one of the most elegant-minded men in the country."

"Nay! don't lecture me with such a *riant* face, or else all your *morale* will be utterly thrown away."

"Ah! you have Retach's Faust there. I did not expect on a drawing-room table at Chateau Desir, to see any thing so old, and so excellent. I thought the third edition of Tremaine would be a very fair specimen of your ancient literature, and Major Deunham's hair-breadth escapes of your modern. There was an excellent story about town, on the return of Denham and Clapperton. The travellers took different routes, in order to arrive at the same point of destination. In his wanderings, the major came to an unheard-of lake, which, with a spirit which they of the Guards surely approved, he christened '*Lake Waterloo*.' Clapperton arrived a few days after him; and the pool was immediately re-baptized '*Lake Trafalgar*.' There was a hot quarrel in consequence. Now, if I had been there, I would have arranged matters, by proposing as a title to meet the views of all parties, '*The United Service Lake*.'"

"That would certainly have been very happy."

"How beautiful Margaret is!" said Vivian, rising from his ottoman, and seating himself on the sofa by the lady. "I always think that this is the only personification where art has not rendered innocence insipid."

"Do you think so?"

"Why, take Una in the Wilderness, or Goody Two Shoes. These, I believe, were the most innocent persons that ever existed, and I'm sure you will agree with me, they always look the most insipid. Nay, perhaps, I was wrong in what I said; perhaps it is insipidity that always looks innocent, not innocence always insipid."

"How can you refine so, Mr. Grey, when the thermometer is at 250°! Pray, tell me some more stories."

"I cannot, I'm in a refining humour: I could almost lecture to-day at the Royal Institution. You would not call these exactly prosopopeias of innocence?" said Vivian, turning over a bundle of Stewart Newton's beauties, languishing, and lithographed. "Newton, I suppose, like Lady Wortley Montague, is of opinion that the face is not the most beautiful part of woman; at least, if I am to judge from these elaborate ankles. Now the countenance of this donna, forsooth, has a drowsy placidity worthy of the easy chair she is loling in, and yet her ankle would not disagree the contorted frame of the most pious Fagius."

"Well! I am an admirer of Newton's paintings."

"O! so am I. He's certainly a cleverish fellow, but rather too much among the blues; a set, of whom, I would venture to say, Miss Manvers knoweth little about."

"O, not the least! Mamma does not visit that way. What are they?"

"O, very powerful people! though '*Mamma does not visit that way.*' They live chiefly about Cumberland Gate. Their words are Ukases as far as Curzon street, and very Decretals in the general vicinity of May fair; but you shall have a further description another time. How those rooks bore! I hate staying with ancient families; you're always *caused* to death. If ever you write a novel, Miss Manvers, mind you have a rookery in it. Since Tremaine, and Washington Irving, nothing will go down without."

"O! by-the-by, Mr. Grey, who is the author of Tremaine?"

"I'll tell you who is *not*!"

"Who?"

"Mr. Ogle."

"But really, who is the author?"

"O, I'll tell you in a moment. It's either Mr. Ryder, or Mr. Spencer Percival, or Mr. Dyson, or Miss Dyson, or Mr. Bowles, or the Duke of Buckingham, or Mr. Ward, or a young officer in the Guards, or an old clergyman in the north of England, or a middle-aged barrister on the Midland circuit."

"You're really so giddy, Mr. Grey.—I wish you could get me an autograph of Mr. Washington Irving; I want it for a particular friend."

"Give me a pen and ink; I'll write you one immediately."

"O! Mr. Grey."

"There, now you've made me blot Faustus."

At this moment the room door suddenly opened and as suddenly shut.

"Who was that, Mr. Grey?"

"Mephistophiles, or Mrs. Felix Lorraine; one or the other—perhaps *both*."

"Mr. Grey?"

"What do you think of Mrs. Felix Lorraine, Miss Manvers?"

"O! I think her a very amusing woman, a very clever woman, a very—but—"

"But what?"

"But I can't exactly make her out."

"Nor I—nor I; she's a dark riddle; and although I am a very *Œdipus*, I confess I have not yet unravelled it. Come, there's Washington Irving's autograph for you; read it, isn't it quite in character! Shall I write any more? One of Sir Walter's, or Mr. Southey's, or Mr. Milman's, or Mr. D'Israeli's? or shall I sprawl a Byron?"

"Mr. Grey! I really cannot patronise such unprincipled conduct. You may make me one of Sir Walter's, however."

"Poor Washington, poor Washington!" said Vivian, writing; "I knew him well in London. He always slept at dinner. One day as he was dining at Mr. Hallam's, they took him, when asleep, to Lady Jersey's rout; and to see the Sieur Geoffrey, when he opened his eyes in the illuminated saloons, was really quite admirable! quite an Arabian tale."

"O, how delightful! I should have so liked to have seen him! He seems quite forgotten now in England. How came we to talk of him?"

"Forgotten—O! he spoilt his elegant talents writing German and Italian twaddle with all the rawness of a Yankee. He ought never to have left America, at least in literature:—there was an uncontented and glorious field for him. He should have been managing director of the Hudson B Company; and lived all his life among the beavers."

"I think there is nothing more pleasant, Mr. Grey, than talking over the season in the count in August."

"Nothing more agreeable. It was dull, though last season, very dull; I think the game cannot be kept going another year. If it wasn't for the general election, we really must have a war for variety's sake. Peace gets quite a bore. Everybody is to dine with commands a good *cuisine*, and gives twelve different wines, all perfect. And as for Mr. Henderson, he is the amateur importer for the whole nation. We cannot bear this any longer; all the lights and shadows of life are lost. The only good thing I heard this year, was an ancient gentleman going up to Gunter, and asking him for a receipt for that white stuff, pointing to his Rose punch. I, who am a great man for receipts, gave it her immediately:—'*One hod of mortar to a bottle of Noyau.*'"

"O, that was too bad! and did she thank you?"

"Thank me! ay, truly; and pushed a card in my hand, so thick and sharp that it cut through my glove. I wore my arm in a sling for a month afterwards."

"And what was the card?"

"O you need not look so arch! The old lady was not even a faithless duenna. It was an invitation to an assembly, or something of the kind, a *locale*, somewhere, as Theodore Hook or Mr. Wilson Croker would say, 'between Mesopotamia and Russell Square.'"

"Do you know Mr. Croker, Mr. Grey?"

"Not in the least. I look upon Mr. Croker myself as the two sublimest men in the United Kingdom. When we do meet, the interview is interesting."

"Pray, Mr. Grey, is it true that all the houses in Russell-square are tenantless?"

"Quite true; the Marquess of Tavistock given up the country in consequence. A great shame—is it not! Let's write it up."

"An admirable plan! but we'll take the house first; of course we can get them at a peppercorn rent."

"What a pity, Miss Manvers, the fashion gone out of selling oneself to the devil."

"Good gracious, Mr. Grey!"

"On my honour, I am quite serious. It appears to me to be a very great pity. What capital plan for younger brothers! It's a kind of thing I've been trying to do all my life, and I could succeed. I began at school with tea and cheese and a pitchfork; and since then I've voked, with all the eloquence of Goethe, the one in the solitude of the Hartz; but without success. I think I should make an excellent bar with him: of course, I don't mean that ugly vulgar savage with a fiery tale. O, no! Satan himself, a perfect gentleman! Or Belial—Belial would be the most delightful. He's the fine genius of the inferno, I imagine, the Beranger of Pandemonium."

"Mr. Grey, I really cannot listen to such

denise one moment longer. What would you have if Belial were here!"

"Let us see. Now, you shall act the spirit, and I Vivian Grey. I wish we had a shorthand writer here to take down the incantation scene. We'd send it to Arnold.—*Commencement*—Spirit! I'll have a fair castle."

The lady bowed.

"I'll have a palace in town."

The lady bowed.

"I'll have lots of the best Havanna cigars."

The lady bowed.

"I'll have a fair wife.—Why, Miss Manvers, you forget to bow!"

"O, dear! Mr. Grey, I really beg your pardon!"

"Come, this is a novel way of making an offer, and, I hope, a successful one."

"Julia, my dear," cried a voice in the veranda;

"Julia, my dear, I want you to walk with me."

"Say you are engaged with the marchioness," whispered Vivian, with a low but distinct voice; his eyes fixed on the table, and his lips not appearing to move.

"Mamma, I'm——"

"I want you immediately and *particularly*, Julia," cried Lady Louisa, with an earnest voice.

"I'm coming, I'm coming.—You see I *must* go, Mr. Grey."

CHAPTER XI.

THE PARK.

"*Confusion* on that old hag! Her eye looked evil on me, at the very moment! Although a pretty wife is really the destruction of a young man's prospects, still, in the present case, the niece of my friend, my *patron*—high family—perfectly unexceptionable, &c. &c. &c. Such blue eyes! upon my honour, this must be an exception to the general rule." Here a light step attracted his attention, and, on turning round, he found Mrs. Felix Lorraine at his elbow.

"O! you're *here*! Mr. Grey, acting the solitaire in the park. I want your opinion about a passage in 'Herman and Dorothea.'"

"My opinion is always at your service; but if the passage is not perfectly clear to Mrs. Felix Lorraine, it will be perfectly obscure, I am convinced, to me."

"O, dear! after all my trouble, I've forgotten my book. How mortifying! Well, I'll show it you after dinner: adieu!—and, by-the-by, Mr. Grey, as I am here, I may as well advise you not to spoil all the marquess's timber, by carving a certain person's name on his park trees. I think your plans in that quarter are admirable. I've been walking with Lady Louisa the whole morning, and you can't think how I puffed you! *Courage, cavalier*, and we shall soon be connected, not only in friendship but in blood."

The next morning at breakfast, Vivian was surprised to find that the Manvers party was suddenly about to leave the castle. All were disconsolate at their departure, for there was to be a grand entertainment at Chateau Desir that very day; but particularly Mrs. Felix Lorraine, and Mr. Vivian Grey. The sudden departure was accounted for by the arrival of "unexpected," &c. &c. There was no hope—the green post-chariot was at the door—

a feeble promise of a speedy return! Julia's eyes were filled with tears.—Vivian was springing forward to press her hand, and bear her to the carriage, when Mrs. Felix Lorraine seized his arm—vowed she was going to faint, and, ere she could recover herself, or loosen her grasp, the Manvers—were gone.

CHAPTER XII.

A MORNING VISIT.

THE gloom which the parting had diffused over all countenances, was quite dispelled when the marquess entered.

"Lady Carabas," said he, "you must prepare for crowds of visitors to-day. There are the Amer-shams, and Lord Alhambra, and Earnest Clay, and twenty other young heroes, who, duly informed that the Miss Courtowns were honouring us with their presence, are pouring in from all quarters—Isn't it so, Juliana?" gallantly asked the marquess of Miss Courtown: "but who do you think is coming besides?"

"Who, who?" exclaimed all.

"Nay, you all guess," said the peer.

"The Duke of Waterloo?" guessed Cynthia Courtown, the romp.

"Prince Hungary?" asked her sister Laura.

"Is it a gentleman?" asked Mrs. Felix Lorraine.

"No, no, you're all wrong, and all very stupid. It's Mrs. Million."

"O, how delightful!" said Cynthia.

"O, how annoying!" said the marchioness.

"You need not look so agitated, my love," said the marquess; "I have written to Mrs. Million, to say that we shall be most happy to see her; but, as the castle is very full, she must not come with fifty carriages and four, as she did last year."

"And will Mrs. Million dine with us in the hall, marquess?" asked Cynthia Courtown.

"Mrs. Million will do what she likes; I only know that I shall dine in the hall, whatever happens, and whoever comes; and so, I suppose, will Miss Cynthia Courtown."

Vivian rode out alone immediately after breakfast, to cure his melancholy by a hard gallop. He left his horse to choose his own road; and, at length, he found himself plunged in a cornfield.

"Hallo, sir! beg pardon; but your horse's feet will do no good to that standing corn; for when there's plenty of roads to ride over—my maxim is, keep out of enclosures."

Vivian turned round, and recognised a friend in the person of a substantial and neighbouring farmer.

Daniel Groves, or as he was commonly called, Mr. Groves, was one of those singular personages, whose eccentricities procure them, from all the surrounding neighbourhood, the reputation of being "quite a character." Daniel was a stout built, athletic man, with a fine florid countenance, and a few gray hairs straggling over his forehead, and beautifully contrasting with his carnationed complexion. His hazel eyes were very small, but they twinkled with perpetual action. A turned-up nose gave his countenance a somewhat conceited expression; and as he was in the habit of being consulted by the whole country, this expression be-

came so habitual, that Mr. Groves always looked as if he himself quite agreed with the general opinion—that he was “one of the most long-headed fellows in these parts,” and “quite a character.” Daniel was not only opulent, but flourishing; but he was not above attending to all the details of his farm, though frequently admitted to the tables of the principal neighbouring gentry.

But by this time Mister Groves, with a particularly large pet pitchfork over one shoulder, and a handful of corn in the other hand, with which he occasionally nourished his ample frame in his toilsome march over the stubble, has reached the trespasser.

“What! is it you, Mr. Grey? who thought of seeing you here?”

“O Mr. Groves, I wasn’t aware I was trespassing on your corn.”

“O! no matter, no matter, friends are always welcome, that’s my maxim. But if you could keep a *little* nearer to the hedge.”

“O! I’ll come out immediately. Which way are you going? I’ve been thinking of calling on you.”

“Well now, do, sir; ride home with me and take a bit of something to eat. My mistress will be remarkable glad to see you. There’s some nice cold pickled pork—we’ve an excellent cheese in cut; and a fine barrel of ale in broach as you ever tasted.”

“Why, Groves! really I can’t turn back to-day; for I want to look in at Conyers’s, and ask him about that trout stream.”

“Well, sir, I’m sorry you’re so pushed, but I do wish you’d come in some day quite promiscuous. You said you would, for I want your opinion of some port wine I’m going to take with a friend.”

“So I will with the greatest pleasure, but I’m not at all a good judge of port, it’s too heavy for me; I’d sooner taste your ale.”

“Ah! it’s the fashion of you young squires to cry down port wine, but depend upon’t it’s the *real* stuff. We never should have beat the French, if it hadn’t been for their poor sour wines. That’s my maxim.”

“Shall you dine at the chateau to-day?”

“Why you see the marquess makes such a point of it, that I can’t well be off. And the country should be kept together sometimes.—That’s the ground I go upon.”

“O! do come—you must come—we can’t do without you; it’s nothing without you, Groves.”

“Well, really, you’re very good to say so, so I can’t say but what I will; but I hope there’ll be something to eat and drink, which I know the name of, for the last time I tended there, there was nothing but kickshaws; my stomach’s not used to such Frenchified messes, and I was altogether *nohowish* by the time I got home. I said to my mistress, ‘really,’ says I, ‘I don’t know what’s the matter with me, but my stomach’s going remarkable wrong;’ so she advised me to take a good stiff glass of brandy and water, while she got a couple of ducks roasted for supper, for pease were just in; sure enough that’s all I wanted, for I slept well after it, and got up quite my own man again. There’s nothing like a glass of brandy and water, cold, without sugar, when you’re out of sorts. That’s my maxim.”

“And a very good maxim too, Mr. Groves. I wish I could get you one of these mornings to look at a horse for me.”

“I shall be very glad. The one you’re on seems rather weak in the fore legs: I should blister him, if he belonged to me. But as to getting you a horse, why, it’s the wrong time of the year; and I’m so remarkably pushed on that point, that I hardly know what to say, but still I always like to do a good turn for a friend, that’s my maxim, so I can’t say but what I’ll see about it. There’s Harry Mounteney now, he wants me to ride over to Woodbury, to look at a brown mare; Stappyn Toad too, he says he’s never satisfied without my opinion, though he generally takes his own in the long run. Ah! those Londoners know nothing about horseflesh. Well, any day you’ll call, I’m your man.”

“Well, thank you, thank you, I shall keep you to your promise.”

“Well sir! good morning, pleasant ride to you. You’ll keep to the roads, I’m sure, till harvest’s in: though they mayn’t be over good for a carriage, they’re very fair for a bridle. That’s the ground I stand upon.”

As Vivian was returning home, he intended to look in at a pretty cottage near the park, where lived one John Conyers, an honest husbandman, and a great friend of Vivian’s. This man had, about a fortnight ago, been of essential service to our hero, when a vicious horse, which he was endeavouring to cure of some ugly tricks, had nearly terminated his mortal career.

“Why are you crying so, my boy?” asked Vivian of a little Conyers, who was sobbing bitterly at the cottage door. He was answered only with desperate sobs. “Is your father at home?”

“O ’tis your honour!” said a decent-looking woman, who came out of the cottage, “I thought they had come back again.”

“Come back again! why, what’s the matter, dame?”

“O! your honour, we’re in sad distress; there’s been a seizure this morning, and I’m mortal fear’d the good man’s beside himself!”

“Good heavens! why didn’t you come to the castle? The marquess surely never gave orders for the infliction of this misery.”

“O, your honour, we a’n’t his lordship’s tenants no longer; there’s been a change for Purley Mead, and now we’re Lord Mounteney’s people. John Conyers has been behindhand ever since he had the fever, but Mr. Sedgwick always gave time, but Lord Mounteney’s gemman says the system’s bad, and so he’ll put an end to it; and so all’s gone, your honour, all’s gone, and I’m mortal fear’d the good man’s beside himself.”

“And who’s Lord Mounteney’s man of business?”

“Mr. Stappylton Toad,” sobbed the good dame.

“Here, boy, leave off crying, and hold my horse; keep your hold tight, but give him rein, he’ll be quiet enough then. I’ll see honest John, dame Conyers.”

“I’m sure your honour’s very kind, but I’m mortal fear’d the good man’s beside himself, and he’s apt to do very violent things when the fit’s on him. He hasn’t been so bad since young Barton behaved so wickedly to his sister.”

“Never mind! I’ll see him; there’s nothing like a friend’s face in the hour of sorrow.”

“I wouldn’t advise your honour,” said the good dame, with a fearful expression of countenance: “it’s an awful hour when the fit’s on him; so

was not friend or foe, and scarcely seems to love me, your honour."

"Never mind, never mind, I'll see him."

Vivian entered the cottage—but O! the scene of desolation, who shall describe! The room was irretrievably stripped, literally, of every thing; there was nothing left, save the bare white-washed walls, and the red tiled flooring. The room was darkened; Vivian seated on an old block of wood, which had been pulled out of the orchard since the bailiff had been John Conyers. The fire was out, but his fingers were still among the ashes. His head was bowed in his hands, and bowed down nearly to his knees. The eldest girl, a fine sensible child of about thirteen, was sitting with two brothers on the floor, in a corner of the room, motionless, their faces grave and still as death, but tearless. Three young children, of an age too tender to know grief, were acting unmeaning gambols near the door.

"O! pray beware, your honour," earnestly whispered the poor dame, as she entered the cottage to bid the visitor.

Vivian walked up with a silent step to the end of the room, where John Conyers was sitting. He remembered this little room, when he thought it the very model of the abode of an English husbandman. A neat row of plates, and the well-scoured utensils, and the fine old Dutch clock, and the ancient amusing ballad, purchased at some neighbour's fair, or of some itinerant bibliopole, and pinned inside the wall—all, all were gone!

"John Conyers!" exclaimed Vivian.

There was no answer, nor did the miserable man appear in the slightest degree to be sensible of Vivian's presence.

"My good John Conyers!"

The man raised his head from his resting-place, he turned to the spot whence the voice proceeded. There was such an unnatural fire in his eyes, that Vivian's spirit almost quailed. Any one but Vivian Grey would have fled the house. His alarm was not decreased when he perceived that the master of the cottage did not recognise him. The fear-stare was, however, short, and again the sufferer's face was hid.

The wife was advancing, but Vivian waved his hand to her to withdraw, and she accordingly fell back to the background, but her fixed eye did not leave her husband for a second.

"John Conyers, it is your friend, Mr. Vivian Grey, who is here," said Vivian.

"Grey!" moaned the husbandman, "Grey, who is he?"

"Your friend, John Conyers. Do you quite forget me?" said Vivian, advancing, and with a smile which Vivian Grey could alone assume.

"I think I have seen you, and you were kind," said the wife, her face was again hid.

"And always will be kind, John Conyers. I come to comfort you. I thought that a kind word's voice would do you good in this hour of your affliction. Come, come, my good Conyers, cheer up, my man!" and Vivian dared to touch his hand.

His hand was not repulsed. "Do you remember what good service you did me when I rode to the footed Moll! O! John Conyers, when the horse was plunging on the hill-top, I was much safer off than you are now; and yet, you see, a kind word came and saved me. You must not give up, my good fellow. After all, a little management will set every thing right," and he took

the husbandman's sturdy hand. John Conyers looked wildly round, but the unnatural fire that had glistened in his eyes was extinguished.

"I do remember you," he faintly cried; "I do remember you. You were always very kind."

"And always will be, I repeat, John Conyers; at least to friends like you. Come, come, there's a man, cheer up and look about you, and let the sunbeams enter your cottage!" and Vivian beckoned to the wife to open the closed shutter.

Conyers stared around him, but his eye rested only on bare walls, and the big tear coursed down his hardy cheek.

"Nay, never mind, man!" said Vivian, "we'll soon have chairs and tables again. And as for the rent, think no more about that at present."

The husbandman looked up to heaven, and then burst into the most violent hysterics. Vivian could scarcely hold down the powerful and convulsed frame of Conyers on his rugged seat; but the wife advanced from the back of the room, and her husband's head rested against her bosom. Vivian held his honest hand, and the eldest girl rose unbidden from her silent sorrow, and clung to her father's knee.

"The fit is over," whispered his wife.

"There, there, there's a man, all is now well," and Vivian left him resting on his wife's bosom.

"Here, you curly-headed rascal, scamper down to the village immediately, and bring up a basket of something to eat; and tell Morgan Price that Mr. Grey says he's to send up a couple of beds, and some chairs here immediately, and some plates and dishes, and every thing else, and don't forget a bottle of wine!" so saying, Vivian flung the urchin a sovereign.

"And now, dame Conyers, for heaven's sake! light the fire. As for the rent, John Conyers, do not waste this trifle on that," whispered Vivian, slipping his purse into his hand, "for I'll see Stappleton Toad, and get time. Why, woman, you'll never strike a light if your tears drop so fast into the tinder-box. Here give it me. You're not fit for work to-day. And how's the trout in Ravely Mead, John, this hot weather? You know you never kept your promise with me. O, you're a sad fellow! There, there's a spark! I wonder why old Toad didn't take the tinder-box. It's a very valuable piece of property, at least, to us. Run and get me some wood, that's a good boy. And so white-footed Moll's past all recovery! Well, she was a pretty creature! There, that will do famously," said Vivian, fanning the flames with his hat. "See, it mounts well! And now, God bless you all! for I'm an hour too late, and must scamper for my very life."

CHAPTER XIII.

THE ARRIVAL.

Mrs. MILLION arrived and kept her promise; only three carriages and four! Out of the first descended the mighty lady herself, with some noble friends, who formed the most distinguished part of her suite: out of the second came her physician, Dr. Sly; her toad-eater, Miss Gusset; her secretary, and her page. The third carriage bore her groom of the chambers, and three female attendants.

There were only two men servants to each equipage; nothing could be more moderate, or, as Miss Gusset said, "in better taste."

Mrs. Million, after having granted the marquess a private interview in her private apartments, signified her imperial intention of dining in public, which, as she had arrived late, she trusted she might do in her travelling dress. The marquess *kotoed* like a first-rate mandarin, and vowed "that her will was his conduct."

The whole suite of apartments was thrown open, and was crowded with guests. Mrs. Million entered; she was leaning on the marquess's arm, and in a travelling dress, namely, a crimson silk pelisse, hat and feathers, with diamond earrings, and a rope of gold around her neck. A train of about twelve persons, consisting of her noble fellow-travellers, toad-eaters, physicians, secretaries, &c. &c. &c., followed. The entree of his majesty could not have created a greater sensation, than did that of Mrs. Million. All fell back. Gartered peers, and starred ambassadors, and baronets with titles older than the creation, and squires, to the antiquity of whose blood chaos was a novelty; all retreated, with eyes that scarcely dared to leave the ground—even Sir Plantagenet Pure, whose family had refused a peerage regularly every century, now, for the first time in his life, seemed *cowed*, and in an awkward retreat to make way for the approaching presence, got entangled with the Mameluke boots of my Lord Alhambra.

At last a sofa was gained, and the great lady was seated; and the sensation having somewhat subsided, conversation was resumed; and the mighty Mrs. Million was not slightly abused, particularly by those who had bowed lowest at her entree; and now the Marquess of Carabas, as was wittingly observed by Mr. Septimus Sessions, a pert young barrister, "went the circuit," that is to say, made the grand tour of the suite of apartments, making remarks to every one of his guests, and keeping up his influence in the country.

"Ah, my Lord Alhambra! this is too kind: and how is your excellent father, and my good friend? Sir Plantagenet, yours most sincerely; we shall have no difficulty about that right of common.—Mr. Leverton, I hope you find the new plough work well—your son, sir, will do the county honour.—Sir Godfrey, I saw Barton upon that point, as I promised.—Lady Julia, I'm rejoiced to see you at Chateau Desir, more blooming than ever!—Good Mr. Stapylton Toad, so that little change was effected!—My Lord Devildrain, this is a pleasure *indeed*!"

"Why, Ernest Clay," said Mr. Buckhurst Stanhope, "I thought Alhambra wore a turban—I'm quite disappointed."

"Not in the country, Stanhope; here he only sits cross-legged on an attomun, and carves his venison with an ataghan."

"Well, I'm glad he doesn't wear a turban—that would be *bad taste*, I think," said fool Stanhope. "Have you read his poem?"

"A little. He sent me a copy, and as I'm in the habit of lighting my cigar or so occasionally with a leaf, why I can't help occasionally seeing a line—it seems quite first-rate."

"Indeed!" said fool Stanhope, "I must get it."

"My dear Puff! I'm quite glad to find you here," said Mr. Cayenne, a celebrated reviewer, to Mr. Parthenopex Puff, a small literateur and

smaller wit. "Have you seen Midall lately?"

"Not very lately," drawled Mr. Part "I breakfasted with him before I left to meet a professor Bopp there, a very interesting and principal of the celebrated university of Golland, the model of the London."

"Ah! indeed! talking of the London, I'm going to Fudge to come in for Westmoreland!"

"Doubtless! O! he's a prodigious fellow. What do you think Booby says? I'm sure that Foaming Fudge can do more than any Great Britain: that he had one day to pick up a king's bench, spout at a tavern, speak in it, and fight a duel—and that he found time for nothing but the *last*."

"Excellent," laughed Mr. Cayenne.

Mr. Parthenopex Puff was reputed in the city, a sayer of good things, but he was a wit, and generally fathered his *bon mots* on his valet Booby, his monkey, or his parrot.

"I saw you in the last number," said C "From the quotations from your own work, I imagine the review of your own book yourself!"

"What do you think Booby said?"

"Mr. Puff, allow me to introduce you to Alhambra," said Ernest Clay, by which Mr. Puff's servant's last good thing was known.

"Mr. Clay, are you an archer?" asked my Lord Alhambra.

"No, fair Dian, but I can act Endymion."

"I don't know what you mean—go away."

"Aubrey Vere, welcome to —shire you seen Prima Donna?"

"No, is he here? How did you like song in the Age?"

"His last song! Pooh! he only supplied scandal."

"Groves," said Sir Hanway Etherington, "you seen the newspaper this morning? Crupper has tried fifteen men for horse-stealing in York, and acquitted every one."

"Well then, Sir Hanway, I think his lordship is remarkably wrong: for when a man gets to suit him, if he loses it, 'tisn't so easy to get it himself again. That's the ground I stand upon."

"Well, there's a good deal in what you say, Groves. By-the-by, have you let that notice which your father used to live in?"

"No, Sir Hanway, no! I keep it in the paper, as I think it should happen to Tom, for he's a very likely young man, and he'll be fit to stand upon it soon. That's the ground I stand upon."

All this time the Marquess of Carabas wanted Vivian Grey twenty times, but the gentleman had not appeared. The important arrival, and his lordship offered his arm to Mrs. Million, who, as the Gotha Almanack says, "precedence of all archduchesses, grand duchesses, princesses, landgravines, margraves, &c. &c. &c."

CHAPTER XIV.

THE HALL

In their passage to the hall, the marquess and Mrs. Million met Vivian Grey, booted and covered with mud.

"O!—Mrs. Million—Mr. Vivian Grey. How's s, my dear fellow? you'll be too late."

"Immense honour!" said Vivian, bowing to the maid to the lady. "O! my lord, I was late, and made a short cut over Fernley Bog. It has saved a very Moscow expedition. However, I'm springing you. I shall be in time for the guava and neurs, and you know that's the only refreshment ever take."

"Who is that, marquess?" asked Mrs. Million.

"That is Mr. Vivian Grey, the most monstrous young man, and nicest fellow I know."

"He does indeed seem a very nice young man," said Mrs. Million; for she rather admired Vivian's scocious taste for liqueurs.

I wish some steam process could be invented: arranging guests when they are above five hundred. In the present instance all went wrong when they entered the hall; but, at last, the arrangements, which, by-the-by, were of the simplest ture, were comprehended, and the guests were seated. There were three tables, each stretching across the hall; the dais was occupied by a military band. The number of guests, the contrast between the antique chamber and the modern stanzas, the music, the various liveried menials, combined to produce a *tout ensemble*, which at the same time was very striking, and "*in remarkable good taste*."

In process of time Mr. Vivian Grey made his appearance. There were a few vacant seats at the bottom of the table, "luckily for him," as kindly remarked Mr. Grumbleton. To the astonishment and indignation, however, of this worthy squire, a late comer passed by the unoccupied position, and proceeded onward with the most undaunted address, until he came to about the middle of the middle table, and which was nearly the best situation in the hall.

"Beautiful Cynthia," said Vivian Grey, softly and sweetly, whispering in Miss Courtown's ear, "I'm sure you will give up your place to me; you've nerve enough, you know, for *any thing*, and I don't care for standing out, than I for lying in."

There's nothing like giving a romp credit for a little boldness. To keep up her character she flattered Herod.

"O! Grey, is it you? certainly, you shall have your place immediately—but I'm not sure that we must make room for you. Dormer Stanhope, we must be made for Grey, or I shall leave the table immediately;—you men!" said the hoyden, turning round to a set of surrounding servants, and then this form down, and put a chair between." The men obeyed. All who sat lower in the table than Miss Cynthia Courtown's side, than that lady, were suddenly propelled downwards about the distance of two feet. Dr. Sly, who was flourishing an immense carving-knife and fork preparatory to dissecting a very gorgeous haunch, had his fearful instruments suddenly precipitated into the air, from whose sugared trellise-work, he found at difficulty in extricating them; while Miss Courtown, who was on the point of cooling herself with some exquisite iced jelly, found her frigid drink as suddenly transformed into a plate of scorchingly ardent curry, the property, but a moment since, of old Colonel Rangoon. Every thing, however, receives a civil reception from a toady, so Miss Courtown burnt herself to death by

devouring a composition which would have reduced any one to ashes who had not fought against Bandoolah.

"Now, that's what I call a very sensible arrangement;—what could go off better?" said Vivian.

"You may think so, sir," said Mr. Boreall, a sharp-nosed and conceited-looking man, who, having got among a set whom he didn't the least understand, was determined to take up Dr. Sly's quarrel, merely for the sake of conversation. "You, I say, sir, may think it so, but I rather imagine that the ladies and gentlemen lower down, can hardly think it a *very sensible arrangement*," and here Boreall looked as if he had done his duty, in giving a young man a proper reproof.

Vivian glanced a look, which would have been annihilation to any one not a freeholder of five hundred acres. "I had reckoned upon two deaths, sir, when I entered the hall, and finding, as I do, that the whole business has apparently gone off without any fatal accident, why I think the circumstances bear me out in my expression."

Mr. Boreall was one of those unfortunate men who always take things *au pied de la lettre*: he consequently looked amazed, and exclaimed, "Two deaths, sir!"

"Yes, sir, two deaths; I reckoned, of course, on some corpulent parent being crushed to death in the scuffle, and then I should have had to shoot his son through the head for his filial satisfaction. Dormer Stanhope, I never thanked you for exerting yourself; send me that fricandeau you have just helped yourself to."

Dormer, who was, as Vivian well knew, something of an epicure, looked rather annoyed, but by this time he was accustomed to Vivian Grey, and sent him the portion he had intended for himself—could epicure do more!

"Who are we among, bright Cynthia?" asked Vivian.

"O! an odd set," said the lady, looking dignified; "but you know we can be *exclusive*."

"*Exclusive*! pooh! trash—talk to everybody; it looks as if you were going to stand for the county. Have we any of the Millionaires near us?"

"The doctor and Toadey are lower down."

"Where's Mrs. Felix Lorraine?"

"At the opposite table, with Ernest Clay."

"O! there's Alhambra next to Dormer Stanhope. Lord Alhambra, I'm quite rejoiced to see you."

"Ah! Mr. Grey—I'm quite rejoiced to see you. How's your father?"

"Extremely well—he's at Paris—I heard from him yesterday. Do you ever see the Weimar Literary Gazette, my lord?"

"No;—why?"

"There's a most admirable review of your poem in the last number I've received."

The young nobleman looked agitated. "I think, by the style," continued Vivian, "that it's by Goethe. It is really quite delightful to see the oldest poet in Europe dilating on the brilliancy of a new star in the poetical horizon."

This was uttered with a perfectly grave voice, and now the young nobleman blushed. "Who is *Gewter*?" asked Mr. Boreall, who possessed such a thirst for knowledge, that he never allowed an opportunity to escape him of displaying his ignorance.

"A celebrated German writer," lisped the modest Miss Macdonald, who was, of course, *beginning German*.

"I never heard his name," persevered the indefatigable Boreall;—"how do you spell it?"

"GOETHE," relisped modestly.

"O! *Goly!*" exclaimed the querist—"I know him well: he wrote the Sorrows of Werter."

"Did he indeed, sir?" asked Vivian, with the most innocent and inquiring face.

"O! don't you know that?" said Boreall;—"and poor stuff it is!" and here the worthy and vulgar landholder laughed loud and long.

"Lord Alhambra! I'll take a glass of Johannisberg with you, if the marquess's wines are in the state they *should* be—

'The Crescent warriors sipp'd their sherbet spiced,
For Christian men the various wines were iced.'

I always think that those are the two most admirable lines in your lordship's poem."

His lordship did not exactly remember them: it would have been a wonder if he had;—but he thought Vivian Grey the most delightful fellow he ever met, and determined to ask him to Helicon Castle, for the Christmas holidays.

"Flat! flat!" said Vivian, as he dwelt upon the flavour of the Rhine's glory. "Not exactly from the favourite binn of Prince Metternich, I think. By-the-by, Dormer Stanhope, you've a taste that way; I'll tell you two secrets, which never forget: decant your Johannisberg, and ice your Maraschino. Ay, don't stare, my dear gastronome, but do it."

"O, Vivian Grey, you little love! why didn't you come and speak to me?" exclaimed a lady who was sitting at the side opposite Vivian, but much higher in the table.

"Ah! adorable Lady Julia! and so you were *done* on the gray filly."

"*Done!*" said the sporting beauty with pouting lips;—"but it's a long story, and I'll tell it you another time."

"Ah! do. How's Sir Peter?"

"O! he's had a fit or two since you saw him last."

"Poor old gentleman! let's drink his health;" and the baronet's recovery was qualified by the lady and Vivian with a very piquant expression of countenance.

"Do you know Lady Julia Knighton?" asked Vivian of his neighbour. Before he could receive an answer, he was again rattling on:—"This hall is bearable to dine in; but I once breakfasted here, and I never shall forget the ludicrous effect produced by the sun through the oriel window. Such complexions! Every one looked like a prize-fighter ten days after a battle. After all, painted glass is a bore. I wish the marquess would have it knocked out, and have plated."

"Knock out the painted glass!" said Mr. Boreall; "well, I must confess I cannot agree with you."

"I should have been extremely surprised if you could. If you don't insult that man, Miss Courtown, in ten minutes I shall be no more; I've already a nervous fever."

"May I have the honour of taking a glass of champagne with you, Mr. Grey?" said Boreall.

"Mr. Grey, indeed!" muttered Vivian: "sir, I never drink any thing but brandy."

"Allow me to give you some champagne, miss," resumed Boreall, as he attacked the modest Miss Macdonald; "champagne, you know," continued he, with a smile of agonizing courtesy, "is quite the ladies' wine."

"Cynthia Courtown," whispered Vivian with a sepulchral voice, "'tis all over with me—I've been thinking what could come next. This is too much—I'm already dead—have Boreall arrested; the chain of circumstantial evidence is very strong."

"Baker!" said Vivian, turning to a servant, "Go, and inquire if Mr. Stapylton Toad dines at the castle to-day."

A flourish of trumpets announced the rise of the Marchioness of Carabas, and in a few minutes the most ornamental portion of the guests had disappeared. The gentlemen made a general "ave up," and Vivian found himself opposite his friend, Mr. Hargrave.

"Ah! Mr. Hargrave, how d'ye do! What do you think of the secretary's state paper?"

"A magnificent composition, and quite unspeakable. I was just speaking of it to my friend here, Mr. Metternich Scribe. Allow me to introduce you to—Mr. Metternich Scribe."

"Mr. Metternich Scribe—Mr. Vivian Grey" and here Mr. Hargrave introduced Vivian to an effeminate-looking, perfumed young man, with a handsome, unmeaning face, and very white hands. In short, as dapper a little diplomatist as ever tumbled about the Congress of Verona, smirking at lady Almack's supper after the opera, or vowed "that Richmond Terrace was a most convenient situation for official men."

"We have had it with us many weeks, before the public received it," said the future under-secretary, with a look at once condescending and conceited.

"Have you?" said Vivian: "well, it does your office credit. It's a singular thing, that Canning and Croker are the only official men who can write grammar."

The dismayed young gentleman of the Foreign Office was about to mince a repartee, when Vivian left his seat, for he had a great deal of business to transact. "Mr. Leverton," said he, addressing a flourishing grazier, "I have received a letter from my friend, M. de Noë. He is desirous of purchasing some Leicestershires for his estate in Burgundy. Pray, may I take the liberty of introducing his agent to you?"

Mr. Leverton was delighted.

"I also want to see you about some other little business. Let me see, what was it? Never mind, I'll take my wine here, if you can make room for me; I shall remember it, I dare say, soon. O! by-the-by—ah! that was it. Stapylton Toad—Mr. Stapylton Toad; I want to know all about Mr. Stapylton Toad—I dare say you can tell me. A friend of mine intends to consult him on a little parliamentary business, and he wishes to know something about him before he calls."

As I am a great lover of conciseness, I shall *resumer*,* for the benefit of the reader, the information of Mr. Leverton.

* I have ventured on using this word, in spite of the plaintive remonstrances contained in a pretty little article in the last number of the Quarterly Review. I deprecate equally with the reviewer, "the *badger* *pedge* of language" now so much in vogue; and although I am not quite prepared to say that I consider this practice "as necessary as wearing perfumes," I must exceedingly regret, that

Stapylton Toad had not the honour of being styled with his father's name, but as the son himself, at an early age, apprenticed to a man of eminence, he was of opinion that his name must have been respectable. *Respectable!* a good word! Stapylton was a very diligent and faithful clerk, but was not as fortunate in his advancement as the celebrated Whittington, for he had no daughter and many sons; in consequence of which Stapylton, not being able to support his master's partner, became his master's

the door of one of the shabbiest houses in Fleet-street, the name of Mr. Stapylton Toad for some time figured, magnificently engraved on a brass plate. There was nothing however, in the appearance of the establishment, to indicate that Mr. Toad's progress was very rapid in his professional career extraordinarily so. In an outward office one solitary room was seen, oftener stirring his office fire than his master's ink; and Mr. Toad was assisted by his brother attorneys, as a gentleman as not recorded in the courts as ever having conducted a single cause. In a few years, however, a new story was added to the Jermyn-street abode, new pointed, and new painted, began to assume a most mansion-like appearance. The door was also thrown open, for the solitary room no longer found time to answer the often-ding bell; and the eyes of the entering client were saluted by a gorgeous green baize office the imposing appearance of which was only equalled by Mr. Toad's new private portal, splendid brass knocker and patent varnish. And his brother attorneys began to wonder, "How got on! and who Toad's clients were?"

A few more years rolled over, and Mr. Toad was seen riding in the park at a most classical pace attended by a groom in a most classical dress. And now "the profession" wondered still at the significant looks were interchanged by respectable houses;" and flourishing practitioners in the city shrugged up their shoulders, and looked mysteriously of "money business," and "odd work in annuities." In spite, however, of charitable surmises of his brother lawyers, it was confessed that nothing of even an equi-voque ever transpired against the character of flourishing Mr. Toad, who, to complete the elevation of his less successful rivals, married, at the same time moved from Jermyn-street to White-square. The new residence of Mr. Toad had previously been the mansion of a nobleman and one whom, as the world said, Mr. Toad had got out of difficulties." This significant remark will probably throw some light upon the mystery of the mysterious business of our prosperous attorney. Noble lords who have been in difficulties, will not much wonder at the prosperity of who get them out.

At this time Mr. Toad became acquainted with Lord Mounteney, a nobleman in great disfavour with fifty thousand per annum. His lordship really did not know how he got involved; but, as he was not married, and his con-

sequent expenses had never been unreasonable; he was not extraordinarily negligent—quite the reverse, was something of a man of business, remembered once looking over his accounts; and yet in spite of this regular and correct career, found himself quite involved, and must leave England."

The arrangement of the *Mounteney property* was the *coup finale* of Mr. Stapylton Toad's professional celebrity. His lordship was not under the necessity of quitting England; and found himself, in the course of five years, in the receipt of a clear rental of five-and-twenty thousand per annum. His lordship was in raptures; and Stapylton Toad purchased an elegant villa in Surrey, and became a member of parliament. Goodburn Park, such was the name of Mr. Toad's country residence, in spite of its double lodges and patent park paling, was not, to Mr. Toad, a very expensive purchase; for he "took it off the hands" of a distressed client, who wanted an immediate supply, "merely to convenience him," and, consequently, became the purchaser at about half its real value. "Attorneys," as Bustle the auctioneer says, "have such opportunities!"

Mr. Toad's career in the House was as correct as his conduct out of it. After ten years' regular attendance, the boldest conjecturer would not have dared to define his political principles. It was a rule with Stapylton Toad, *never to commit himself*. Once, indeed, he wrote an able pamphlet on the Corn Laws, which excited the dire indignation of that egregious body, the Political Economy Club. But Stapylton cared little for their subtle confutations, and their loudly expressed contempt. He had obliged the country gentlemen of England, and ensured the return, at the next election, of Lord Mounteney's brother for the county. At this general election, also, Stapylton Toad's purpose in entering the House became rather more manifest; for it was found, to the surprise of the whole country, that there was scarcely a place in England—county, city, town or borough—in which Mr. Stapylton Toad did not possess some influence. In short, it was discovered that Mr. Toad had "a first-rate parliamentary business;" that nothing could be done without his co-operation, and every thing with it. In spite of his prosperity, Stapylton had the good sense never to retire from business, and even to refuse a baronetcy, on condition, however, that it should be offered to his son.

Stapylton, like the rest of mankind, had his weak points. The late Marquess of Almack was wont to manage him very happily, and Toad was always introducing that minister's opinion of his importance. "My time is quite at your service, general, although the poor dear marquess used to say, 'Mr. Stapylton Toad, *your time is mine*.' He knew the business I had to get through!" The family portraits, also, in most ostentatious frames, now adorned the dining-room of his London mansion; and it was amusing to hear the worthy M. P. dilate upon his likeness to his respected father.

"You see, my lord," Stapylton would say, pointing to a dark, dingy picture of a gentleman in a court dress, "you see, my lord, it is not a very good light, and it certainly is a very dark picture—by Hudson; all Hudson's pictures were dark. But if I were six inches taller, and could hold the light just *there*, I think your lordship would be astonished at the resemblance; but it's a dark picture—certainly it's dark—all Hudson's pictures were."

to be the Quarterly Review, and so strenuous are we for "keeping our pure well of English undefiled," Quarterly Reviewers, should interlard his sentences with the most trivial Latin quotations, with a classical enthusiasm of a very young schoolboy, or a very ancient

CHAPTER XV.

THE DRAWING-ROOM.

THE cavaliers have left the ancient hall, and the old pictures frown only upon empty tables. The marquess immediately gained a seat by Mrs. Milion, and was soon engrossed in deep converse with that illustrious lady. In one room, the most eminent and exclusive, headed by Mrs. Felix Lorraine, were now winding through the soothing mazes of a slow waltz, and now whirling, with all the rapidity of eastern dervishes, to true double Wien time. In another saloon, the tedious tactics of quadrilles commanded the exertions of less civilized beings; here Liberal Snake, the celebrated political economist, was lecturing to a knot of terrified country gentlemen, and there a celebrated Italian improvisatore poured forth to an ignorant and admiring audience, all the dulness of his inspiration. Vivian Grey was holding an earnest conversation in one of the recesses with Mr. Stapylton Toad. He had already charmed that worthy, by the deep interest which he took in every thing relating to elections and the House of Commons, and now they were hard to work on the corn laws. Although they agreed upon the main points, and Vivian's ideas upon this important subject had, of course, been adopted after studying with intense-ness Mr. Toad's "most luminous and convincing pamphlet," still there were a few minor points, on which Vivian "was obliged to confess," that he did not exactly see his way. Mr. Toad was astonished, but argumentative, and of course, in due time, had made a convert of his companion; "a young man," as he afterwards remarked to Lord Mounteney, "in whom he knew not which most to admire, the soundness of his own views, or the candour with which he treated those of others." If you wish to win a man's heart, allow him to confute you.

"I think, Mr. Grey, you must admit, that that definition of *labour* is the correct one!" said Mr. Toad, looking earnestly in Vivian's face, his finger just presuming to feel a button.

"That exertion of mind or body, which is not the involuntary effect of the influence of natural sensations," slowly repeated Vivian, as if his whole soul was concentrated in each monosyllable—"Y-e-s, Mr. Toad, I do admit it."

"Then, my dear sir, the rest follows of course," triumphantly exclaimed the member. "Don't you see it?"

"Although I admit the correctness of your definition, Mr. Toad, I am not free to confess, that I am ex-act-ly convinced of the soundness of your conclusion," said Vivian, in a very musing mood.

"But, my dear sir, I am surprised that you don't see, that—"

"Stop, Mr. Toad," eagerly exclaimed Vivian, "I see my error. I misconceived your meaning: you are right, sir, your definition is correct."

"I was confident that I should convince you, Mr. Grey."

"This conversation, I assure you, Mr. Toad, has been to me a peculiarly satisfactory one. Indeed, sir, I have long wished to have the honour of making your acquaintance. When but a boy, I remember at my father's table, the late Marquess of Almacks—"

"Yes, Mr. Grey."

"One of the ablest men, Mr. Toad, after all that this country ever produced."

"O, poor, dear man!"

"I remember him observing to a friend of mine who was at that time desirous of getting into the House,—'Hargrave,' said his lordship, 'if you want any information upon points of *præcis politics*'—that was his phrase; you remember Mr. Toad, that his lordship was peculiar in his phrases?"

"O! yes, poor dear man; but you were observing, Mr. Grey—"

"Ay, ay! 'If you want any information,' said his lordship, 'on such points, there is *only* as man in the kingdom whom you should consult and he's one of the soundest heads I know, as that's Stapylton Toad; the member for Mounteney; you know you were in for Mounteney than Mr. Toad."

"I was, I was, and accepted the Chilterns to make room for Augustus Clay, Ernest Clay's brother; who was so involved, that the only way to keep him out of the house of correction, was to get him into the House of Commons. But the marquess said so, eh?"

"Ay, and much more, which I scarcely can remember;" and then followed a long dissertation on the character of the noble statesman, and his views as to the agricultural interest; and the importance of the agricultural interest; and then a delicate hint was thrown out, as to "how delightful it would be to write a pamphlet together," on this mighty agricultural interest, and then came an *éloge* on the character of country gentlemen, and English yeomen, and the importance of keeping up the old English spirit in the peasantry, &c., &c.; and then, when Vivian had lead Mr. Toad to deliver a most splendid and patriotic oration on this point, he "just remembered, (quite apropos to the sentiments which Mr. Toad had just delivered, and which he did not hesitate to say, 'did equal honour to his head and heart,') that there was a little point which, if it was not trespassing too much on Mr. Toad's attention, he would just submit to him;" and then he mentioned poor John Conyer's case, although "he felt convinced from Mr. Toad's well known benevolent character, that it was quite unnecessary for him to do so, as he felt assured that it would be remedied immediately if it fell under his cognizance, but then Mr. Toad had really so much business to transact, that perhaps these light matters might occasionally not be submitted to him," &c., &c.

What could Stapylton Toad do but, after a little amiable grumbling about "bad system and bad precedent," promise every thing that Vivian Grey required.

"Mr. Vivian Grey," said Mrs. Felix Lorraine, "I cannot understand why you've been talking to Mr. Toad so long; will you waltz?"

Before Vivian could answer, a tittering, so audible that, considering the rank of the parties, it might almost be termed a loud shout, burst forth from the whole room. Cynthia Courtown had stolen behind Lord Alhambra, as he was sitting on an ottoman *à la Turque*, and had folded a cachemere shawl round his head with a most oriental tie. His lordship, who, notwithstanding his eccentricities, was really a most amiable man, bore his blushing honours with a gracious dignity, worthy of a descendant of the Abencerrages. The

ation which this incident occasioned, favoured Vivian's escape from Mrs. Felix, for he had not Mr. Stappylton Toad with any intention of litzing.

But he had hardly escaped from the waltzers, he found himself in danger of being involved in a much more laborious duty: for now he mingled on the political economist, and he was earnestly requested by the contending theorists, to assume the office of moderator. Emboldened by success, Liberal Snake had had the hardihood to attack a personage of whose character he was utterly ignorant, but on whom he was extremely desirous of "making an impression." This important person was Sir Christopher Mowbray, who, upon the lecturer presuming to inform him what rent was, damned himself if he didn't know what rent was a damned deal better than any damned French smuggler. I don't wish to be coarse, but Sir Christopher is a great man, and the sayings of great men, particularly when they are representative of the sentiment of a species, should not pass unrecorded.

Sir Christopher Mowbray is member for the county of —shire; and member for the county intends to be next election, although he is in his seventy-ninth year, for he can still follow a fox, with as pluck a heart, and with as stout a voice as any squire in Christendom. Sir Christopher, it must be confessed, is rather peculiar in his ideas. His grandson, Peregrine Mowbray, who is as pert a genius as the applause of a common-room ever bestowed, and as sublime an orator as the cheers of the union even yet inspired, says, "the present is not up to the nineteenth century;" and perhaps this very significant phrase will give the reader a more significant idea of Sir Christopher Mowbray, than a character as long and as laboured as the most perfect of my Lord Clarendon's. The truth is, the good baronet had no idea of "liberal principles," or any thing else of that school. His most peculiar characteristic, is a singular habit which he has got of styling political economists, *French Smugglers*. Nobody has ever yet succeeded in extracting a reason from him for this singular appellation, and even if you angle with the most exquisite skill for the desired definition, Sir Christopher immediately salutes you with a volley of oaths, and damns French wines, Bible dicties, and Mr. Huskisson. Sir Christopher for half a century has supported in the senate, with equal sedulousness and silence, the constitution and the corn laws; he is perfectly aware of the present perilous state of the country," and attaches with great interest all "the plans and lots" of this enlightened age. The only thing which he does not exactly comprehend, is the London university. This affair really puzzles the worthy gentleman, who could as easily fancy a county member not being a freeholder, as a university not being at Oxford or Cambridge. Indeed, to this hour the old gentleman believes that the whole business is "a damned hoax;" and if you tell him, that, far from the plan partaking of the visionary nature he conceives, there are actually four acres of very valuable land purchased near his Conduit House for the erection; and that there is little apprehension, that in the course of a century, the wooden poles which are now stuck about the ground, will be fair and flourishing, as

the most leafy bowers of New College Gardens, the old gentleman looks up to heaven, as if determined not to be taken in, and leaning back in his chair, sends forth a sceptical and smiling "No! no! no! that won't do."

Vivian extricated himself with as much grace as possible from the toils of the economist, and indeed, like a skilful general, turned this little rencontre to account, in accomplishing the very end, for the attainment of which he had declined waltzing with Mrs. Felix Lorraine.

"My lord," said Vivian, addressing the marquess, who was still by the side of Mrs. Million, "I am going to commit a most ungallant act; but you great men must pay a tax for your dignity. I am going to disturb you. You are wanted by half the county! What could possibly induce you ever to allow a political economist to enter Chateau Desir? There are, at least, three baronets and four squires in despair, writhing under the tortures of Liberal Snake. They have deputed me to request your assistance, to save them from being defeated in the presence of half their tenantry; and I think, my lord," said Vivian, with a very serious voice, "if you could possibly contrive to interfere, it would be desirable. That lecturing knave never knows when to stop, and he's actually insulting men before whom, after all, he ought not dare to open his lips. I see that your lordship is naturally not very much inclined to quit your present occupation, in order to act moderator to a set of political brawlers; but come, you shall not be quite sacrificed to the county—I will give up the waltz in which I was engaged, and keep your seat until your return."

The marquess, who was always "keeping up county influence," was very much shocked at the obstreperous conduct of Liberal Snake. Indeed he had viewed the arrival of this worthy with no smiling countenance, but what could he say, as he came in the suite of Lord Pert, who was writing, with the lecturer's assistance, a pretty little pamphlet on the currency; apologizing to Mrs. Million, and promising to return as soon as possible, and lead her to the music room, the marquess retired with the determination of annihilating one of the stoutest members of the Political Economy Club.

Vivian began by apologizing to Mrs. Million for disturbing her progress to the hall, by his sudden arrival before dinner; and then for a quarter of an hour was poured forth the usual quantity of piquant anecdotes, and insidious compliments. Mrs. Million found Vivian's conversation no disagreeable relief to the pompous prosiness of the late *attaché*, and, although no brilliant star dangled at his breast, she could not refrain from feeling extremely pleased.

And now, having succeeded in commanding Mrs. Million's attention by that general art of pleasing, which was for all the world, and which was, of course, formed upon his general experience of human nature,—Vivian began to make his advances to Mrs. Million's feelings, by a particular art of pleasing; that is, an art which was for the particular person alone whom he was at any time addressing, and which was founded on his particular knowledge of that person's character.

"How beautiful the old hall looked to-day! It is a scene which can only be met with in ancient families."

"Ah! there is nothing like old families!" remarked Mrs. Million, with all the awkward feelings of a *nouveau riche*.

"Do you think so?" said Vivian, "I once thought so myself, but I confess that my opinion is greatly changed.—After all, what is noble blood? My eye is now resting on a crowd of honourables, and yet being among them, do we treat them in a manner differing in any way from that which we should employ to any individuals of a lower *caste*, who were equally uninteresting?"

"Certainly not," said Mrs. Million.

"The height of the ambition of the less exalted ranks is to be *noble*, because they conceive to be noble implies to be superior; associating in their minds, as they always do, a pre-eminence over their equals. But, to be noble, among nobles, where is the pre-eminence?"

"Where, indeed?" said Mrs. Million; and she thought of herself, sitting the most considerable personage in this grand castle, and yet with sufficiently base blood flowing in her veins.

"And thus, in the highest circles," continued Vivian, "a man is of course not valued because he is a marquess, or a duke, but because he is a great warrior, or a great statesman, or very fashionable, or very witty. In all classes but the highest, a peer, however unbefriended by nature or by fortune, becomes a man of a certain rate of consequence, but to be a person of consequence in the highest class, requires something else except high blood."

"I quite agree with you in your sentiments, Mr. Grey. Now what character, or what situation in life, would you choose, if you had the power of making your choice?"

"That is really a most metaphysical question. As is the custom of all young men, I have sometimes, in my reveries, imagined what I conceived to be a lot of pure happiness;—and yet Mrs. Million will perhaps be astonished that I was—neither to be nobly born, nor to acquire nobility, that I was not to be a literary man, nor a warrior, nor indeed any profession, nor a merchant, nor even a professional dandy."

"O! love in a cottage, I suppose," interrupted Mrs. Million.

"Neither love in a cottage, nor science in a cell."

"O! pray tell me what it is."

"What it is! O! Lord Mayor of London, I suppose; that is the only situation which answers to my oracular description."

"O! then you've been joking all this time."

"O! no; not at all. Come, then, let us imagine this perfect lot. In the first place, I would be born in the middling classes of society, or even lower, because I would wish my character to be impartially developed. I would be born to no hereditary prejudices, nor hereditary passions. My course in life should not be carved out by the example of a grandfather, nor my ideas modelled to a preconceived system of family perfection. Do you like my first principles, Mrs. Million?"

"I must hear every thing before I give an opinion."

"When, therefore, my mind was formed, I would wish to become the proprietor of a princely fortune."

"Yes!" eagerly exclaimed Mrs. Million.

"And now would come the moral singularity of

my fate. If I had gained this fortune by commerce, or in any other similar mode, my disposition, before the creation of this fortune, would naturally be formed, and be permanently developed; and my mind would be similarly affected, had I succeeded to some ducal father; for I should then, in all probability, have inherited some family line of conduct both moral and political; but under the circumstances I have imagined the result would be far different. I should then be in the singular situation of possessing, at the same time, unbounded wealth and the whole powers and natural feelings of my mind unoppressed and unshackled. O! how splendid would be my career! I would not allow the change in my condition to exercise any influence on my natural disposition. I would experience the same passions, and be subject to the same feelings, only they should be exercised, and influential in a wider sphere. Then would be seen the influence of great wealth, directed by a disposition similar to that of the generality of men, inasmuch as it had been formed like that of the generality of men; and, consequently, one much better acquainted with their feelings, their habits, and their wishes. Such a lot would indeed be princely! Such a lot would infallibly insure the affection and respect of the great majority of mankind; and, supported by them, what should I care if I were misunderstood by a few fools, and abused by a few knaves?"

Here came the marquess to lead the lady to the concert. As she quitted her seat, a smile, beaming with graciousness, rewarded her youthful companion. "Ah!" thought Mrs. Million; "I go to the concert, but leave sweeter music than can possibly meet me there. What is the magic of these words! It is not flattery: such is not the language of Miss Gusset! It is not a *refacimento* of compliments: such is not the style with which I am saluted by the Duke of Doze and the Earl of Leatherdale! Apparently I have heard a young philosopher delivering his sentiments upon an abstract point in human life; and yet have I not listened to the most brilliant apology for my own character, and the most triumphant defence of my own conduct. Of course it was unintentional, and yet how agreeable to the unintentionally defended!" So mused Mrs. Million, and she made a thousand vows, not to let a day pass over without obtaining a pledge from Vivian Grey to visit her on their return to the metropolis.

Vivian remained in his seat for some time after the departure of his companion. "On my honour, I have half a mind to desert my embryo faction, and number myself in her gorgeous retinue. Let me see—what part should I act? her secretary, or her toadecater—or her physician, or her cook? or shall I be her page? Methinks I should make a pretty page, and hand a chased goblet as gracefully as any monkey that ever bent his knee in a lady's chamber. Well! at any rate, there is this chance to be kept back, as the gambler does his last trump, or the cunning fencer his last *ruse*."

He rose to offer his arm to some stray fair one; for crowds were now hurrying to pineapple and lobster salads: that is to say, supper was ready in the LONG GALLERY.

In a moment Vivian's arm was locked in that of Mrs. Felix Lorraine.

"O! Mr. Grey, I have got a much better ghost story than even that of the Leyden professor, for you; but I'm so wearied with waltzing, that I

must tell it you to-morrow. How came you to be so late this morning? Have you been paying many calls to-day? I quite missed you at dinner. Do you think Ernest Clay handsome? I daren't repeat what Lady Scrope said of you! You are an admirer of Lady Julia Knighton, I believe?—I don't much like this plan of supping in the long gallery—it's a favourite locale of mine, and I have no idea of my private promenade being invaded with the uninteresting presence of trifles and Italian creams. Have you been telling Mrs. Million that she was very witty?" asked Vivian's companion, with a very significant look.

CHAPTER XVI.

TOADEYS.

SWEET reader! you know what a toadey is! That agreeable animal which you meet every day in civilized society. But perhaps you have not speculated very curiously upon this interesting race. *Tant pis!* for you cannot live many lustres without finding it of some service to be a little acquainted with their habits.

The world in general is under a mistake as to the nature of these vermin. They are by no means characterized by that similarity of disposition for which your common observer gives them credit. There are toadeys of all possible natures.

There is your commonplace toadey, who merely echoes its feeder's commonplace observations. There is your playing-up toadey, who, unconscious to its feeder, is always playing up to its feeder's weakness—and, as the taste of that feeder varies, accordingly provides its cates and confitures. A little bit of scandal for a dashing widow, or a pious little hymn for a sainted one; the secret history of a newly discovered gas for a May Fair feeder, and an interesting anecdote about a Newgate bobcap or a penitentiary apron for a charitable one. Then there is your drawing-out toadey, who omits no opportunity of giving you a chance of being victorious in an argument where there is no contest, and a dispute where there is no difference; and then there is ———; but I detest essay writing, so I introduce you at once to a party of these vermin. If you wish to enjoy a curious sight, you must watch the toadeys when they are unembarrassed by the almost perpetual presence of their feeders—when they are animated by "the spirit of freedom;" when, like Curran's negro, the chain bursts by the impulse of their swelling veins. The great singularity is the struggle between their natural and their acquired feelings; the eager opportunity which they seize of revenging their voluntary bondage, by their secret taunts on their adopted taskmasters; and the servility which they habitually mix up, even with their scandal. Like veritable grimalkins, they fawn upon their victims previous to the festival—compliment them upon the length of their whiskers, and the delicacy of their limbs, prior to excoriating them, and dwelling on the flavour of their crashed bones. O! 'tis a beautiful scene, and ten thousand times more piquant than the rumours of a servants' hall, or the most grotesque and glorious moments of high life below stairs.

"Dear Miss Graves," said Miss Gusset, "you an't imagine how terrified I was at that horrible

green parrot flying upon my head! I declare it pulled out three locks of hair."

"Horrible green parrot, my dear madam! why it was sent to my lady by Prince Xtmmprqtoaklw, and never shall I forget the agitation we were in about that parrot. I thought it would never have got to the chateau, for the prince could only send his carriage with it as far as Toadcaster: luckily my lady's youngest brother, who was staying at Desir, happened to get drowned at the time—and so Davenport, very clever of him! sent her on in my Lord Dormer's hearse."

"In the hearse! Good heavens, Miss Graves! How could you think of green parrots at such an awful moment! I should have been in fits for three days. Eh! Dr. Sly?"

"Certainly you would, madam—your nerves are very delicate."

"Well! I, for my part, could never see much use in giving up to one's feelings. It's all very well for commoners," rather rudely exclaimed the marchioness toadey—"but we did not choose to expose ourselves to the servants. When the old general died this year, every thing went on as usual. Her ladyship attended Almack's; my lord took his seat in the house; and I looked in at Lady Doubtful's; where we don't visit, but where the marchioness wishes to be civil."

"O! we don't visit Lady Doubtful either," replied Miss Gusset: "she hadn't a card for our *fête champêtre*. O! I was so sorry you were not in town. It was so delightful!"

"O! do tell me who was there. I quite long to know all about it. I saw an account of it in the papers. Every thing seemed to go off so well. Do tell me who was there?"

"O! there was plenty of royalty at the head of the list. Really I can't go into particulars, but everybody was there—who is anybody—eh! Dr. Sly?"

"Certainly, madam. The pines were most admirable; there are few people for whom I entertain a higher esteem than Mr. Gunter."

"The marchioness seems very fond of her dog and parrot, Miss Graves—but she's a sweet woman!"

"O, a dear, amiable creature! but I can't think how she can bear the eternal screaming of that noisy bird."

"Nor I, indeed. Well, thank goodness, Mrs. Million has no pets—eh! Dr. Sly?"

"Certainly—I'm clearly of opinion that it can't be wholesome to have so many animals about a house. Besides which, I have noticed that the marchioness always selects the nicest morsels for that little poodle; and I'm also clearly of opinion, Miss Graves, that the fit it had the other day arose from repletion."

"O! I've no doubt of it in the world. She consumes three pounds of arrow-root weekly, and two pounds of the finest loaf sugar, which I have the trouble of grating every Monday morning. Mrs. Million appears to be a most amiable woman, Miss Gusset?"

"O! quite perfection—so charitable, so intellectual, such a soul! it's a pity though her manner is so abrupt, she really does not appear to advantage sometimes—eh! Dr. Sly?"

The toadey's toadey bowed assent as usual. "Well," rejoined Miss Graves, "that's rather a

fault of the dear marchioness—a little want of consideration for another's feelings, but she means nothing."

"O, no! nor Mrs. Million, dear creature, she means nothing; though, I dare say, not knowing her so well as we do—eh! Dr. Sly! you were a little surprised at the way in which she spoke to me at dinner."

"All people have their oddities, Miss Gusset. I'm sure the marchioness is not aware how she tries my patience about the little wretch Julie;—I had to rub her with warm flannels for an hour and a half, before the fire this morning;—that's that Vivian Grey's doing."

"Who is this Mr. Grey, Miss Graves?"

"Who, indeed!—Some young man the marquess has picked up, and who comes lecturing here about poodles, and parrots, and thinking himself quite lord paramount, I assure you; I'm surprised that the marchioness, who is a most sensible woman, can patronize such conduct a moment; but whenever she begins to see through him, the young gentleman has always got a story about a bracelet, or a bandeau, and quite turns her head."

"Very disagreeable, I'm sure—eh! Dr. Sly!"

"Some people are very easily managed. By-the-by, Miss Gusset, who could have advised Mrs. Million to wear crimson? So large as she is, it does not at all suit her: I suppose it's a favourite colour."

"Dear Miss Graves, you're always so insinuating. What can Miss Graves mean—eh! Dr. Sly!"

A Lord Burleigh shake of the head.

"Cynthia Courtown seems as lively as ever," said Miss Gusset.

"Yes, lively enough, but I wish her manner was less brusque."

"Brusque, indeed! you may well say so; she nearly pushed me down in the hall; and when I looked as if I thought she might have given me a little more room, she tossed her head and said, 'Beg pardon, never saw you.'"

"I wonder what Lord Alhambra sees in that girl."

"O! those forward misses always take the men—eh! Dr. Sly!"

"Well," said Miss Graves, "I've no notion that it will come to any thing.—I am sure, I, for one, hope not," added she with a toadsey's venom.

"The marquess seems to keep a remarkably good table," said the physician. "There was a haunch to-day, which I really think was the finest haunch I ever met with; but that little move at dinner—it was, to say the least, very ill-timed."

"Yes, that was Vivian Grey again," said Miss Graves, very indignantly.

"So, you've got the Beaconsfields here, Miss Graves:—nice, unaffected, quiet people?"

"Yes! very quiet. As you say, Miss Gusset, very quiet, but a little heavy."

"Yes, heavy enough."

"If you had but seen the quantity of pineapples that boy Dormer Stanhope devoured at our fête champêtre!—but I've the comfort of knowing that they made him very ill—eh! Dr. Sly!"

"O! he learnt that from his uncle," said Miss Graves—"It's quite disgusting to see how that Vivian Grey encourages him."

"What an elegant, accomplished woman Mrs.

Felix Lorraine seems to be, Miss Graves!—I suppose the marchioness is very fond of her?"

"O, yes—the marchioness is so good-natured, that I dare say she thinks very well of Mrs. Felix Lorraine. She thinks well of every one—but I believe Mrs. Felix is rather a greater favourite with the *marquess*."

"O—h!" drawled out Miss Gusset with a very significant tone. "I suppose she's one of your playing-up ladies. I think you told me she was only on a visit here."

"A pretty long visit though for a sister-in-law,—if sister-in-law she be. As I was saying to the marchioness the other day, when Mrs. Felix offended her so violently by trampling on the dear little Julie—if it came into a court of justice, I should like to see the proof—that's all. At any rate, it's pretty evident that Mr. Lorraine has had enough of his bargain."

"Quite evident, I think—eh! Dr. Sly!—Those German women never make good English wives," continued Miss Gusset with all a toadsey's patriotism.

"Talking of wives, didn't you think Lady Julia spoke very strangely of Sir Peter after dinner to-day? I hate that Lady Julia, if it's only for petting Vivian Grey so. She positively called him little love—very flighty, and sickening."

"Yes, indeed—it is quite enough to make one sick—eh! Dr. Sly!"

The doctor shook his head mournfully, remembering the haunch.

"They say Ernest Clay's in sad difficulties, Miss Gusset."

"Well, I always expected his dash would end in that. Those wild harum-scarum men are monstrous disagreeable—I like a person of some reflection—eh! Dr. Sly!"

Before the doctor could bow his usual assent, there entered a pretty little page, very daintily attired in a fancy dress of green and silver. Twirling his richly-chased dirk with one tiny white hand, and at the same time playing with a pet curl which was most picturesquely flowing over his forehead, he advanced with ambling gait to Miss Gusset, and, in a mincing voice, and courtly phrase, summoned her to the imperial presence.

The lady's features immediately assumed the expression which befitted the approaching interview, and in a moment Miss Graves and the physician were left alone.

"Very amiable young woman Miss Gusset appears to be, Dr. Sly."

"O! the most amiable young lady in the world—I owe her the greatest obligations."

"So gentle in her manners."

"O yes, so gentle."

"So considerate for everybody."

"O, yes! so considerate," echoed the Aberdeen M. D.

"I am afraid though she must sometimes meet with people who don't exactly understand her character; such extraordinary consideration for others is sometimes liable to misconstruction."

"Very sensibly remarked, Miss Graves; I am sure Miss Gusset means well; and that kind of thing is all very admirable in its way—but—"

"But what, Dr. Sly?"

"Why, I was merely going to hazard an observ-

ording to my feelings—that is, to my view of the case—I should prefer thinking more about their own business—but I mean nothing.”

Of course not, Dr. Sly; you know we are our own immediate friends—at least, I am sure they are our friends; but as you say, or going to say, those persons are very anxious about other people’s affairs, and always the most agreeable persons to live with. It certainly did strike me that the interference of Miss Gusset’s about was, to say the least, very odd.”

Dear madam! when you know her as you’ll see she’s always ready to put

to you know, Dr. Sly, between ourselves exactly my impression, and she is very—I don’t exactly mean to say inquisitive; but—but you understand?”

And if I were to speak my mind, I don’t hesitate to do in confidence to you, I really should say, that she is the most irritable, malicious, meddling, and at the same time, *faunting* disposition, that I ever met in the whole course of my life—and I have experience.”

Now you know, Dr. Sly, from all I’ve said as exactly my impression; therefore I am particularly careful not to commit myself to a person.”

Miss Graves! if all ladies were like her—h!”

Dr. Sly!”

CHAPTER XVII.

THE CABINET DINNER.

Lord Beaconsfield had duly acquainted the marquess with the progress of his negotiations with the French, and his lordship himself had been with them singly on the important business, which was thought proper, however, in the proceedings, that the parties interested should be together, and so the two lords, and the marquess, and Vivian, were invited to dine with the marquess alone, and in his library.

There was an abundance of dumb-waiters, and footmen, by which the ease of the guests was consulted, without risking even their heads to the gaze of liveried menials. The gentlemen sat in an antechamber, in which no aid might be necessary, and every thing Lord Beaconsfield averred, was “on the same footing as the cabinet dinners.”

In the ancient kingdoms of England, it hath been a custom to dine previously to transacting business. This habit is one of those few odd and contingent upon the mutable fancies of the age, and at this day we see cabinet dinners, dinners, alike proving the correctness of the custom. Whether the custom really exists, or the general progress of which gives rise to it, is a grave question, but I do not feel qualified to decide. Certainly often, after the dinner, an appointment for the transaction of the business

on the following morning: at the same time it must be remembered that had it not been for the opportunity which the banquet afforded of developing the convivial qualities of the guests, and drawing out, by the assistance of generous wine, their most kindly sentiments, and most engaging feelings, it is very probable that the appointment for the transaction of the business would never have been made at all.

There certainly was every appearance that “the great business,” as the marquess styled it, would not be very much advanced by the cabinet dinner at Chateau Desir. For, in the first place, the table was laden “with every delicacy of the season,” and really, when a man is either going to talk sense, fight a duel, or make his will, nothing should be seen at dinner save rump steaks and the lightest Bourdeaux. And, in the second place, it must be candidly confessed, that when it came to the point of all the parties interested meeting, the marquess’s courage somewhat misgave him. Not that any particular reason occurred to him, which would have induced him to yield one jot of the *theory* of his sentiments, but the putting them in practice rather made him nervous. In short, he was as convinced as ever that he was an ill-used man of first-rate talent, but then he remembered his agreeable sinecure and his dignified office, and he might not succeed.—“The thought did not please.”

But here they were all assembled; receding was impossible; and so the marquess dashed off a tumbler of Burgundy, and felt more courageous. His lordship’s conduct did not escape the hawk eye of one of his guests, and Vivian Grey was rather annoyed at seeing the marquess’s glass so frequently refilled. In fact, the marquess was drinking deep, and deep drinking was neither my Lord Carabas’s weak nor strong point, for he was neither habitually a toper, nor one who bore wine’s sweet influence like a docile subject.

The venison was so prime, that not one word relative to the subject of their meeting was broached during the whole dinner; and Lord Beaconsfield, more than once, thought to himself, that had he ever been aware that business was so agreeable, he too would have been a statesman. But the haunch at last vanished, and the speech from the throne commenced.

“My lords and gentlemen,” began the marquess, “although I have myself taken the opportunity of communicating to you singly my thoughts upon a certain subject, and although, if I am rightly informed, my excellent young friend has communicated to you more fully upon that subject, yet, my lords and gentlemen, I beg to remark that this is the first time that we have collectively assembled to consult on the possibility of certain views, upon the propriety of their nature, and the expediency of their adoption.” Here the bottle passed, and the marquess took a bumper. “My lords and gentlemen, when I take into consideration the nature of the various interests of which the body politic of this great empire is regulated; (Lord Courtown, the bottle stops with you,) when I observe, I repeat, this, I naturally ask myself what right, what claims, what—what—what—I repeat, what right these governing interests have to the influence which they possess? (Vivian, my boy, you’ll find Champagne on the waiter behind you.) Yes, gentlemen, it is in this temper, (the cork-screw’s by Sir Berdmore,) it is, I repeat, in this

emperor, and actuated by these views that we meet together this day. Gentlemen, to make the matter short, it is clear to me that we have all been under a mistake; that my Lord Courtown, and my Lord Beaconsfield, and Sir Berdmore Scrope, and my humble self, are not doing our duty to our country, in not taking the management of its affairs into our own hands! Mr. Vivian Grey, a gentleman with whom you are all acquainted,—Mr. Vivian Grey is younger than myself, or you, my Lord Courtown, or you, my Lord Beaconsfield, or even you, I believe, Sir Berdmore. Mr. Vivian Grey has consequently better lungs than any of us, and he will, I make no doubt, do what I would, if I were of his age, explain the whole business to us all; and now, my lords and gentlemen, let us have a glass of Champagne.”

A great deal of “desultory conversation,” as the reporters style it, relative to the great topic of debate, now occurred; and as the subject was somewhat dry, the Carabas Champagne suffered considerably. When the brains of the party were tolerably elevated, Vivian addressed them. The tenor of his oration may be imagined. He developed the new political principles, demonstrated the mistake under the baneful influence of which they had so long suffered, promised them place, and power, and patronage, and personal consideration, if they would only act on the principles which he recommended in the most flowing language, and the most melodious voice, in which the glories of ambition were ever yet chaunted. There was a buzz of admiration when the flattering music ceased; the marquess smiled triumphantly, as if to say, “Didn’t I tell you he was a monstrous clever fellow?” and the whole business seemed settled, Lord Courtown gave in a bumper, “*Mr. Vivian Grey, success to his maiden speech!*” and Vivian dashed off a tumbler of Champagne to “*the New Union*,” and certainly the whole party were in extreme good spirits. At last, Sir Berdmore, the coolest of them all, raised his voice: “He quite agreed with Mr. Grey in the principles which he had developed; and, for his own part, he was free to confess that he had the most perfect confidence in that gentleman’s very brilliant abilities, and augured from their exertion the most complete and triumphant success. At the same time, he felt it his duty to remark to their lordships, and also to that gentleman, that the House of Commons was a new scene to him; and he put it whether they were quite convinced that they were sufficiently strong as regarded talent in that assembly. He could not take it upon himself to offer to become the leader of the party. Mr. Grey *might* be capable of undertaking that charge, but still, it must be remembered, that in that assembly he was as yet *untried*. He made no apology to Mr. Grey for speaking his mind so freely; he was sure that his motives could not be misinterpreted. If their lordships, on the whole, were of opinion that this charge should be intrusted to him, he, Sir Berdmore, having the greatest confidence in Mr. Grey’s abilities, would certainly support him to the utmost.”

“He can do any thing,” shouted the marquess; who was now quite tipsy.

“He’s a surprising clever man!” said Lord Courtown.

“He’s a surprising clever man!” echoed Lord Beaconsfield.

“Stop, my lords,” burst forth Vivian, “your good opinion deserves my gratitude, but these important matters do *indeed* require a moment’s consideration. I trust that Sir Berdmore Scrope does not imagine that I am the vain idiot to be offended at his most excellent remarks, even for a moment. Are we not met here for the common good—and to consult for the success of the common cause! Whatever my talents are, they are at your service—and in your service will I venture any thing; but, surely, my lords, you will not unnecessarily intrust this great business to a raw hand! I need only aver that I am ready to follow any leader, who can play his great part in a becoming manner.”

“Noble!” hallooed the marquess; who was now quite drunk.

But who was the leader to be? Sir Berdmore frankly confessed that he had none to propose; and the viscount and the baron were quite silent.

“Gentlemen!” bawled the marquess, and his eye danced in his beaming face, “Gentlemen! there is a man who could do our bidding.” The eyes of every guest were fixed on the haranguing host.

“Gentlemen, fill your glasses—I give you our leader—Mr. Frederick Cleveland.”

“Cleveland!” was the universal shout. A glass of claret fell from Lord Courtown’s hand; Lord Beaconsfield stopped as he was about to fill his glass, and stood gaping at the marquess, with the decanter in his hand; and Sir Berdmore stared on the table, as men do when something unexpected and astounding has occurred at dinner, which seems past all their management.

“Cleveland!” shouted the guests.

“I should as soon have expected you to have given us Lucifer!” said Lord Courtown.

“Or the present secretary!” said Lord Beaconsfield.

“Or yourself,” said Sir Berdmore Scrope.

“And does any one mean to insinuate that Frederick Cleveland is not capable of driving out every minister that has ever existed since the days of the deluge?” demanded the marquess, with a fierce air.

“We do not deny Mr. Cleveland’s powers, my lord; we only humbly beg to suggest that it appears to us, that, of all the persons in the world, the man with whom Mr. Cleveland would be least inclined to coalesce, would be the Marquess of Carabas.”

In spite of the Champagne, the marquess looked blank.

“Gentlemen,” said Vivian, “do not despair; it’s enough for me to know that there is a man who is capable of doing our work. Be he animate man, or incarnate fiend, provided he can be found within this realm, I pledge myself that within ten days he is drinking my noble friend’s health at this very board.”

The marquess hallooed “Bravo!”—the rest laughed, and rose in confusion; Lord Beaconsfield fell over a chair, and extricating himself with admirable agility, got entangled with a dumb-waiter, which came tumbling down with a fearful crash of plates, bottles, knives, and decanters. The pledge was, however, accepted, and the marquess and Vivian were left alone. The worthy pair, though terrifically tipsy, seemed quite overcome by Vivian’s offer and engagement.

“Vivian, my boy, you don’t know what you’ve done—you don’t indeed—take care of yourself,

7,—you're going to call on the devil, you are—
—you're going to leave your card at the

Didn't you hear what Lord Beaconsfield, worthy gentleman, but, between ourselves, a d fool, that's *entre nous* though, *entre nous* y didn't you hear Lord Beaconsfield, no, was d Beaconsfield? No, no, your memory, i, 's very bad; it was Lord Courtown: didn't ear him say that Frederick Cleveland was r.—He is Lucifer; he is, upon my honour—hocking! What times we live in! To of you, Vivian Grey; you, a respectable man, with a worthy and respectable father; k of you leaving your card at—the devil's! ocking! shocking! But never mind, my llow, never mind, don't lose heart—I'll tell hat to do—*talk* to him, and, by Jove, if he t make me an apology, I am not a cabinet er. Good night, my dear fellow; he's sure e an apology; don't be frightened; remember say, *talk* to him;—*talk—talk*." So saying, rthy marquess reeled and retired.

'hat have I done?" thought Vivian; "I'm hat Lucifer *may* know, for I do not. This and is, I suppose, after all but a *man*. I saw ble fools were wavering; and to save all a leap in the dark. Well! is my skull i! *Nous verrons*. How hot either this room blood is! Come, for some fresh air; (he the library window) how fresh and soft it ust the night for the balcony. Ha! music! ot mistake that voice. Singular woman! t walk on, till I'm beneath her window."

an accordingly proceeded along the balcony, extended down one whole side of the 1. While he was looking at the moon he ed against some one. It was Colonel Deln. He apologized to the *militaire* for tread- his toes, and wondered how the devil he re!

BOOK THE THIRD.

CHAPTER I.

'A COLLEAGUE.

DERICK CLEVELAND was educated at Eton Cambridge; and after having proved, both school and the University, that he possessed of the first order, he had the courage, in perfect them, to immure himself for three a German University. It was impossible, re, for two minds to have been cultivated on contrary systems, than those of Frederick and Vivian Grey. The systems on they had been educated were not, however, iscordant than the respective tempers of the

With that of Vivian Grey the reader is mewhat acquainted. It has been shown s was one precociously convinced of the ty of managing mankind by studying their ; and humouring their weaknesses. Cleveland from the book of nature with con- and although his was a mind of extraordinary ss, he was, at three-and-thirty, as ignorant workings of the human heart, as when, in ocence of boyhood, he first reached Eton.

The inaptitude of his nature to consult the feelings, or adopt the sentiments of others, was visible in his slightest actions. He was the only man who ever passed three years in Germany, and in a German University, who had never yielded to the magic influence of a Meerschaaum; and the same inflexibility of character which prevented him from smoking in Germany, attracted in Italy the loud contempt of those accomplished creatures—the Anglo-Italians. The Dutchess of Derwentwater, who saluted with equal *naivete* a cardinal, or a captain of banditti, was once almost determined to exclude Mr. Cleveland from her conversation, because he looked so much like an Englishman; and at Florence he was still more unpopular; for he abused Velluti, and pasquinaded his patroness.

Although possessed of no fortune, from the respectability of his connexions and the reputation of his abilities, he entered parliament at an early age. His success was eminent. It was at this period that he formed a great friendship with the present Marquess of Carabas, many years his senior, and then under-secretary of state. His exertions for the party to which Mr. Under-Secretary Lorraine belonged were unremitting; and it was mainly through their influence that a great promotion took place in the official appointments of the party. When the hour of reward came, Mr. Lorraine and his friends unfortunately forgot their youthful champion. He remonstrated, and they smiled: he reminded them of private friendship, and they answered him with political expediency. Mr. Cleveland went down to the House, and attacked his old comrades in a spirit of unexampled bitterness. He examined in review the various members of the party that had deserted him. They trembled on their seats, while they writhed beneath the keenness of his satire: but when the orator came to Mr. President Lorraine, he flourished the tomahawk on high, like a wild Indian chieftain; and the attack was so awfully severe, so overpowering, so annihilating, that even this hackneyed and hardened official trembled, turned pale, and quitted the House. Cleveland's triumph was splendid, but it was only for a night. Disgusted with mankind, he scouted the thousand offers of political connexions which crowded upon him; and having succeeded in making an arrangement with his creditors, he accepted the Chiltern Hundreds.

By the interest of his friends, he procured a judicial situation of sufficient emolument, but of local duty; and to fulfil this duty he was obliged to reside in North Wales. The locality, indeed, suited him well, for he was sick of the world at nine-and-twenty; and, carrying his beautiful and newly-married wife from the world, which without him she could not love, Mr. Cleveland enjoyed all the luxuries of a cottage ornée in the most romantic part of the principality. Here were born unto him a son and daughter, beautiful children, upon whom the father lavished all the affection which nature had intended for the world.

Four years had Cleveland now passed in his solitude,—it must not be concealed, an unhappy man. A thousand times, during the first year of his retirement, he cursed the moment of excitation which had banished him from the world; for he found himself without resources, and restless as a curbed courser. Like many men who are bound to be orators—like Curran, and like Fox,—Cleveland was not blessed, or cursed, with the faculty of composition; and

indeed, had his pen been that of a ready writer, pique would have prevented him from delighting or instructing a world, whose nature he endeavoured to persuade himself was base, and whose applause ought consequently to be valueless. In the second year he endeavoured to while away his time by interesting himself in those pursuits which Nature has kindly provided for country gentlemen. Farming kept him alive six months; but, at length, his was the prize ox; and, having gained a cup, he got wearied of kine too prime for eating; wheat too fine for the composition of the staff of life; and ploughs so ingeniously contrived, that the very ingenuity prevented them from being useful. Cleveland was now seen wandering over the moors and mountains, with a gun over his shoulder, and a couple of pointers at his heels; but ennui returned in spite of his *patent percussion*; and so, at length, tired of being a sportsman, he almost became, what he had fancied himself in an hour of passion,—a misanthrope.

With the aid of soda-water and Mr. Sadler, Vivian had succeeded, the morning after the cabinet-dinner, in getting the marquess up at a tolerably early hour; and, after having been closeted with his lordship for a considerable time, he left Chateau Desir.

Vivian travelled night and day, until he stopped at KENRICH LODGE—such was the correct style of Mr. Cleveland's abode. What was he to do now? After some deliberation, he despatched a note to Mr. Cleveland, informing him, "that he (Mr. Grey) was the bearer, from England, to Mr. Cleveland, of a 'communication of importance.' Under the circumstances of the case, he observed that he had declined bringing any letters of introduction. He was quite aware, therefore, that he should have no right to complain if he had to travel back three hundred miles without having the honour of an interview; but he trusted that this necessary breach of etiquette would be overlooked."

The note produced the desired effect; and an appointment was made for Mr. Grey to call at Kenrich Lodge on the following morning.

Vivian, as he entered the room, took a rapid glance at the master of Kenrich Lodge. Mr. Cleveland was a tall and elegantly formed man, with a face which might have been a model for manly beauty. He came forward to receive Vivian, with a Newfoundland dog on one side, and a large black greyhound on the other; and the two animals, after having elaborately examined the stranger, divided between them the luxuries of the rug. The reception which Mr. Cleveland gave our hero was cold and constrained in the extreme, but it did not appear to be purposely uncivil; and Vivian flattered himself that his manner was not unusually stiff.

"I don't know whether I have the honour of addressing the son of the author of —?" said Mr. Cleveland with a frowning countenance, which was intended to be courteous.

"I have the honour of being the son of Mr. Grey."

"Your father, sir, is a most amiable, and able man. I had the pleasure of his acquaintance when I was in London many years ago, at a time when Mr. Vivian Grey was not intrusted, I rather imagine, with missions 'of importance.'"—Although Mr. Cleveland smiled when he said this, his smile was any thing but a gracious one. The subdued *astire of his keen eye* burst out for an instant, and

he looked as if he would have said, "Who is this younger who is trespassing upon my retirement?"

Vivian had, unbidden, seated himself by the side of Mr. Cleveland's library-table; and, not knowing exactly how to proceed, was employing himself by making a calculation whether there were more black than white spots on the body of the old Newfoundland, who was now apparently most happily slumbering.

"Well, sir!" continued the Newfoundland's master, "the nature of your communication! I am fond of coming to the point."

Now this was precisely the thing which Vivian had determined not to do; and so he *diplomatized*, in order to gain time.—"In stating, Mr. Cleveland, that the communication which I had to make was one of importance, I beg it to be understood, that it was with reference merely to *my* opinion of its nature that the phrase was used, and not as relative to the possible, or, allow me to say, the probable opinion of Mr. Cleveland."

"Well, sir!" said that gentleman, with a somewhat disappointed air.

"As to the purport or nature of the communication, it is," said Vivian, with one of his sweetest cadences, and looking up to Mr. Cleveland's face, with an eye expressive of all kindness,—"*it is of a political nature.*"

"Well, sir!" again exclaimed Cleveland; looking very anxious, and moving restlessly on his library chair.

"When we take into consideration, Mr. Cleveland, the present aspect of the political world; when we call to mind the present situation of the two great political parties, you will not be surprised, I feel confident, when I mention that certain personages have thought that the season was at hand, when a move might be made in the political world with very considerable effect—"

"Mr. Grey, what am I to understand?" interrupted Mr. Cleveland, who began to suspect that the envoy was no greenhorn.

"I feel confident, Mr. Cleveland, that I am doing very imperfect justice to the mission with which I am intrusted; but, sir, you must be aware that the delicate nature of such disclosures and——"

"Mr. Grey, I feel confident that you do not doubt my honour; and, as for the rest, the world has, I believe, some foolish tales about me; but, believe me, *you* shall be listened to with patience. I am certain that, whatever may be the communication, Mr. Vivian Grey is a gentleman who will do its merits justice."

And now Vivian, having succeeded in exciting Cleveland's curiosity, and securing himself the certainty of a hearing, and having also made a favourable impression, dropped the diplomatist altogether, and was explicit enough for a Spartan.

"Certain noblemen and gentlemen of eminence and influence, hitherto considered as props of the — party, are about to take a novel and decided course next session. It is to obtain the aid and personal co-operation of Mr. Cleveland, that I am now in Wales."

"Mr. Grey, I have promised to listen to you with patience;—you are too young a man to know much perhaps of the history of so insignificant a personage as myself; otherwise you would have been aware, that there is no subject in the world on which I am less inclined to converse than that of politics. If I were entitled to take such a liberty

I would beseech you to think of them as little as I do;—but enough of this: who is the mover of the party?"

"My Lord Courtown is a distinguished member of it."

"Courtown—Courtown; respectable certainly; but surely the good viscount's skull is not exactly the head for the chief of a cabal?"

"There is my Lord Beaconsfield."

"Powerful—but a dolt."

"Well," thought Vivian, "it must out at last; and so to it boldly. And, Mr. Cleveland, there is little fear that we may secure the powerful interest and tried talents of—the Marquess of Carabas."

"The Marquess of Carabas!" almost shrieked Mr. Cleveland, as he started from his seat and paced the room with hurried steps; and the greyhound and the Newfoundland jumped up from their rug, shook themselves, growled, and then imitated their master in promenading the apartment, but with more dignified and stately paces. "The Marquess of Carabas! Now, Mr. Grey, speak to me with the frankness which one high-bred gentleman should use to another,—is the Marquess of Carabas privy to this application?"

"He himself proposed it."

"Then, sir, is he baser than even I conceived. O! Mr. Grey, I am a man spare of my speech to those with whom I am unacquainted; and the world calls me a soured, malicious man. And yet, when I think for a moment, that one so young as you are, with such talents, and, as I will believe, with so pure a spirit, should be the dupe, or tool, or even present friend, of such a creature as this perjured peer, I could really play the woman—and weep."

"Mr. Cleveland," said Vivian—and the drop which glistened in his eye responded to the tear of passion which slowly quivered down his companion's cheek,—"*I am grateful for your kindness; and although we shall most probably part, in a few hours, never to meet again, I will speak to you with the frankness which you have merited, and to which I feel you are entitled. I am not, the dupe of the Marquess of Carabas; I am not, I trust, the dupe, or tool, of any one whatever. Believe me, sir, there is that at work in England, which, taken at the tide, may lead on to fortune. I see this, sir,—I, a young man, uncommitted in political principles, unconnected in public life, feeling some confidence, I confess, in my own abilities, but desirous of availing myself, at the same time, of the powers of others. Thus situated, I find myself working for the same end as my Lord Carabas, and twenty other men of similar calibre, mental and moral; and, sir, am I to play the hermit in the drama of life, because, perchance, my fellow-actors may be sometimes fools, and occasionally knaves?*"

"Mr. Cleveland, if the Marquess of Carabas has done you ill service which fame says he has, your sweetest revenge will be to make him your tool: your most perfect triumph, to rise to power by his influence."

"I confess that I am desirous of finding in you the companion of my career. Your splendid talents have long commanded my admiration, and, as you have given me credit for something like good feeling, I will say that my wish to find in you a colleague is greatly increased, when I see that those splendid talents are even the least estimable traits in Mr. Cleveland's character. But sir, per-

haps all this time I am in error,—perhaps Mr. Cleveland is, as the world reports him, no longer the ambitious being that once commanded the admiration of a listening senate,—perhaps, convinced of the vanity of human wishes, Mr. Cleveland would rather devote his attention to the furtherance of the interests of his immediate circle;—and, having schooled his intellect in the universities of two nations, is probably content to pass the hours of his life in mediating in the quarrels of a country village."

Vivian ceased. Cleveland heard him, with his head resting on both his arms. He started at the last expression, and something like a blush suffused his cheek, but he did not reply. At last he jumped up, and rang the bell. "Come, come, Mr. Grey," said he, "enough of politics for this morning. You shall not, at any rate, visit Wales for nothing. Morris! send down to the village for all the sacs and portmanteaus belonging to this gentleman. Even we cottagers have a bed for a friend, Mr. Grey;—come, and I'll introduce you to my wife."

CHAPTER II.

A COLLEAGUE.

AND Vivian was now an inmate of Kenrich Lodge. It would have been difficult to have conceived a life of more pure happiness, than that which was apparently enjoyed by its gifted master. A beautiful wife, and lovely children, and romantic situation, and an income sufficient, not only for their own, but for the wants of all their necessitous neighbours;—what more could man wish? Answer me, thou inexplicable myriad of sensations, which the world calls human nature!

Three days passed over in the most delightful converse. It was so long since Cleveland had seen any one fresh from the former scenes of his life, that the company of any one would have been delightful; but here was a companion, who knew every one, every thing, full of wit, and anecdotes, and literature, and fashion, and then so engaging in his manners, and with such a winning voice.

The heart of Cleveland relented; his stern manner gave way; all his former warm and generous feeling gained the ascendant: he was in turn, amusing, communicative, and engaging. Finding that he could please another, he began to be pleased himself. The nature of the business on which Vivian was his guest, rendered confidence necessary; confidence begets kindness. In a few days, Vivian necessarily became more acquainted with Mr. Cleveland's disposition and situation, than if they had been acquainted for as many years; in short,

They talked with open heart and tongue,
Affectionate and true,—
A pair of friends.

Vivian, for some time, dwelt upon every thing but the immediate subject of his mission; but when, after the experience of a few days, their hearts were open to each other, and they had mutually begun to discover that there was a most astonishing similarity in their principles, their tastes, their feelings, then the magician poured forth his incantation, and raised the once-laid ghost of Cleveland's ambition. The recluse agreed to take the

lead of the *Carabas party*. He was to leave Wales immediately and resign his place; in return for which, the nephew of Lord Courtown was immediately to give up, in his favour, an office of considerable emolument, and having thus provided some certainty for his family, Frederick Cleveland prepared himself to combat for a more important office.

CHAPTER III.

THE ARRIVAL.

"Is Mr. Cleveland handsome?" asked Mrs. Felix Lorraine of Vivian, immediately on his return, "and what colour are his eyes?"

"Upon my honour I haven't the least recollection of ever looking at them; but I believe he is not blind."

"How foolish you are! now tell me, pray, *point de moquerie*, is he amusing?"

"What does Mrs. Felix Lorraine mean by *amusing*?" asked Vivian with an arch smile.

"O! you always tease me with your definitions; go away—I'll quarrel with you."

"O! by-the-by, Mrs. Felix Lorraine, how is Colonel Delmington?"—

Vivian redeemed his pledge: Mr. Cleveland arrived. It was the wish of the marquess, if possible, not to meet his old friend till dinner-time. He thought that, surrounded by his guests, and backed by his bottle, certain awkward senatorial reminiscences might be got over. But, unfortunately, Mr. Cleveland arrived about an hour before dinner, and, as it was a cold autumnal day, most of the visitors, who were staying at Chateau Desir, were assembled in the drawing-room. The marquess sallied forward to receive his guest with a most dignified countenance, and a most aristocratic step; but, before he got halfway, his coronation pace degenerated into a strut, and then into a shamble, and with an awkward and confused countenance, half impudent, and half flinching, he held forward his left hand to his newly arrived visitor. Mr. Cleveland looked terrifically courteous, and amiably arrogant. He greeted the marquess with a smile, at once gracious and grim, and looked something like Goliath, as you see the Philistine depicted in some old German painting, looking down upon the pigmy fighting men of Israel.

As is generally the custom, when there is a great deal to be arranged, and many points to be settled, days flew over, and very little of the future system of the party was matured. Vivian made one or two ineffectual struggles to bring the marquess to a business-like habit of mind, but his lordship never dared trust himself alone with Cleveland, and indeed almost lost the power of speech when in presence of the future leader of his party; so, in the morning, the marquess played off the two lords and the baronet against his former friend, and then to compensate for not meeting Mr. Cleveland in the morning, he was particularly courteous to him at dinner-time, and asked him always "how he liked his ride!" and invariably took wine with him. As for the rest of the day, he had particularly requested his faithful counsellor, Mrs. Felix Lorraine, "for God's sake to take this man off his shoulders;" and so that lady, with her usual

kindness, and merely to oblige his lordship, was good enough to patronise Mr. Cleveland, and on the fourth day was taking a moon-lit walk with him.

Mr. Cleveland had now been ten days at Chateau Desir, and was to take his departure the next morning for Wales, in order to arrange every thing for his immediate settlement in the metropolis. Every point of importance was postponed until their meeting in London. Mr. Cleveland only agreed to take the lead of the party in the Commons, and received the personal pledge of Lord Courtown as to the promised office.

It was a September day, and to escape from the excessive heat of the sun, and at the same time to enjoy the freshness of the air, Vivian was writing his letters in the conservatory, which opened into one of the drawing-rooms. The numerous party, which then honoured the chateau with their presence, were out, as he conceived, on a picnic excursion to the Elfin's Well, a beautiful spot about ten miles off; and among the adventurers were, as he imagined, Mrs. Felix Lorraine, and Mr. Cleveland.

Vivian was rather surprised at hearing voices in the adjoining room, and he was still more so, when, on looking round, he found that the sounds proceeded from the very two individuals whom he thought were far away. Some tall American plants concealed him from their view, but he observed all that passed distinctly, and a singular scene it was. Mrs. Felix Lorraine was on her knees at the feet of Mr. Cleveland; her countenance indicated the most contrary passions, contending as it were, for mastery—supplication—anger,—and, shall I call it?—*love*. Her companion's countenance was hid, but it was evident that it was not wreathed with smiles: there were a few hurried sentences uttered, and then both quitted the room at different doors—the lady in despair,—and the gentleman—in disgust.

CHAPTER IV.

THE ELFIN'S WELL.

AND now Chateau Desir was almost deserted. Mrs. Million continued her progress northward. The Courtowns, and the Beaconsfields, and the Scropes quitted immediately after Mr. Cleveland. and when the families that form the *matériel* of the visiting *corps* retire, the nameless nothings that are always lounging about the country mansions of the great, such as artists, tourists, literateurs, and other live stock, soon disappear. Mr. Vivian Grey agreed to stay another fortnight, at the particular request of the marquess.

Very few days had passed, ere Vivian was exceedingly struck at the decided change which suddenly took place in his lordship's general behaviour towards him.

The marquess grew reserved and uncommunicative, scarcely mentioning "the great business," which had previously been the sole object of his conversation, but to find fault with some arrangement, and exhibiting, whenever his name was mentioned, a marked acrimony against Mr. Cleveland. This rapid change alarmed, as much as it astonished Vivian, and he mentioned his feelings

and observations to Mrs. Felix Lorraine. That lady agreed with him that something certainly was wrong, but could not, unfortunately, afford him any clue to the mystery. She expressed the liveliest solicitude that any misunderstanding should be put an end to, and offered her services for that purpose.

In spite, however, of her well-expressed anxiety, Vivian had his own ideas on the subject; and, determined to unravel the affair, he had recourse to a person, with whom he seldom entercchanged a sentence—the marchioness.

"I hope your ladyship is well to-day. I had a letter from Count Caumont this morning. He tells me that he has got the prettiest poodle from Paris that you can possibly conceive! waltzes like an angel, and acts *proverbs* on its hind feet."

Her ladyship's eyes glistened with admiration.

"I've told Caumont to send it me down immediately, and I shall then have the pleasure of presenting it to your ladyship."

Her ladyship's eyes sparkled with delight.

"I think," continued Vivian, "I shall take a ride to-day. By-the-by, how's the marquess? he seems in low spirits lately."

"O! Mr. Grey, I don't know what you've done to him," said her ladyship, settling at least a dozen bracelets; "but—but—"

"But *what* my lady?"

"He thinks—he thinks—"

"Thinks what, my lady?"

"That you've entered into a conspiracy, Mr. Grey."

"Entered into a conspiracy!"

"Yes, Mr. Grey, a conspiracy—a conspiracy against the Marquess of Carabas, with Mr. Cleveland. He thinks that you have made him serve your purpose, and that now you're going to get rid of him."

"Well, that's excellent, and what else does he think?"

"He thinks you talk too loud," said the marchioness, still working at her bracelets.

"Well, that's shockingly vulgar! Allow me to recommend your ladyship to alter the order of those *bracelets*, and place the blue and silver against the maroon. You may depend upon it, that's the true Vienna order—and what else does the marquess say?"

"He thinks you are generally too authoritative. Not that I think so, Mr. Grey; I'm sure your conduct to me has been more courteous—the blue and silver *next* to the maroon, did you say? Yes—certainly it does look better. I've no doubt the marquess is quite wrong; and I dare say you'll set things right immediately. You'll remember the pretty poodle, Mr. Grey, and you'll not tell the marquess I mentioned any thing."

"O! certainly not. I'll give orders for them to book an inside place for the poodle, and send him down by the coach immediately. I must be off now. Remember, the blue and silver *next* the maroon. Good morning to your ladyship."

"Mrs. Felix Lorraine, I am your most obedient slave," said Vivian Grey, as he met that lady on the landing-place;—"I can see no reason why I should not drive you this bright day to the Elfin's Well; we have long had an engagement together."

The lady smiled a gracious assent; the pony phaeton was immediately ordered.

"How pleasant Lady Courtown and I used to

discourse about martingales! I think I invented one, didn't I? Pray, Mrs. Felix Lorraine, can you tell me what a martingale is? for upon my honour I've forgotten or never knew."

"If you found a martingale for the mother, Vivian, it had been well if you had found a curb for the daughter. Poor Cynthia! I had intended once to advise the marchioness to interfere, but one forgets these things."

"One does.—O! Mrs. Felix," exclaimed Vivian, "I told your admirable story of the Leyden professor to Mrs. Cleveland. It's universally agreed to be the best ghost story extant. I think you said you knew the professor?"

"O, well! I have seen him often, and heard the story from his own lips. And as I mentioned before, far from being superstitious, he was an *esprit fort*.—Do you know, Mr. Grey, I have such an interesting packet from Germany to-day; from my cousin, Baron Rodenstein; but I must keep all the stories for the evening: come to my boudoir, and I will read them to you—there is one tale which I am sure will make a convert even of you. It happened to Rodenstein himself, and within these three months," added the lady, in a serious tone.—"The Rodensteins are a singular family. My mother was a Rodenstein.—Do you think this beautiful?" said Mrs. Felix, showing Vivian a very small miniature which was attached to a chain round her neck. It was the portrait of a youth, habited in the costume of a German student. His rich brown hair was flowing over his shoulders, and his dark blue eyes beamed with such a look of mysterious inspiration, that they might have befitted a young prophet.

"Very, very beautiful!"

"Tis Max—Max Rodenstein," said the lady, with a faltering voice. "He was killed at Leipzig, at the head of a band of his friends and fellow-students. O! Mr. Grey, this is a fair work of art, but if you had but seen the prototype, you would have gazed on this as on a dim and washed out drawing. There was one portrait, indeed, which did him more justice—but then, that portrait was not the production of mortal pencil."

Vivian looked at his companion with a somewhat astonished air, but Mrs. Felix Lorraine's countenance was as little indicative of jesting, as that of the young student whose miniature rested on her bosom.

"Did you say *not* the production of a mortal hand, Mrs. Felix Lorraine?"

"I'm afraid I shall weary you with my stories, but the one I am about to tell is so well evidenced, that I think even Mr. Vivian Grey will hear it without a sneer."

"A sneer! O! lady love, do I ever sneer?"

"Max Rodenstein was the glory of his house. A being so beautiful in body, and in soul, you cannot imagine, and I will not attempt to describe. This miniature has given you some faint idea of his image, and yet this is only the copy of a copy. The only wish of the Baroness Rodenstein, which never could be accomplished, was the possession of a portrait of her youngest son—for no consideration could induce Max to allow his likeness to be taken. His old nurse had always told him, that the moment that his portrait was taken, he would die. The condition upon which such a beautiful being was allowed to remain in the world, was, as she always said, that his beauty should not be imi-

tated. About three months before the battle of Leipsic, when Max was absent at the university, which was nearly four hundred miles from Rodenstein castle, there arrived one morning a large case directed to the barones. On opening it, it was found to contain a picture—the portrait of her son. The colouring was so vivid, the general execution so miraculous, that for some moments they forgot to wonder at the incident in their admiration of the work of art. In one corner of the picture, in small characters, yet fresh, was an inscription, which on examining they found consisted of these words, '*Painted last night. Now, lady, thou hast thy wish.*' My aunt sunk into the baron's arms.

"In silence and in trembling the wonderful portrait was suspended over the fire-place of my aunt's most favourite apartment. The next day, they received letters from Max. He was quite well, but mentioned nothing of the mysterious painting.

"Three months afterwards, as a lady was sitting alone in the barones's room, and gazing on the portrait of him she loved right dearly, she suddenly started from her seat, and would have shrieked, had not an indefinable sensation prevented her. The eyes of the portrait moved. The lady stood leaning on a chair, pale, and trembling like an aspen, but gazing steadfastly on the animated portrait. It was no illusion of a heated fancy; again the eyelids trembled, there was a melancholy smile, and then they closed. The clock of Rodenstein castle struck three. Between astonishment and fear, the lady was tearless. Three days afterwards came the news of the battle of Leipsic, and at the very moment that the eyes of the portrait closed, Max Rodenstein had been pierced by a Polish lancer."

"And who was this wonderful lady, the witness of this wonderful incident?" asked Vivian.

"That lady was myself."

There was something so singular in the tone of Mrs. Felix Lorraine's voice, and so peculiar in the expression of her countenance, as she uttered these words, that the jest died on Vivian's tongue; and for want of something better to do, he lashed the little ponies, who were already scampering at their full speed.

The road to the Elfin's Well ran through the wildest parts of the park; and after an hour and a half's drive, they reached the fairy spot. It was a beautiful and pellucid spring, that bubbled up in a small wild dell, which, nurtured by the flowing stream, was singularly fresh and green. Above the spring, the taste of the marquess, or the marquess's steward, had erected a Gothic arch of gray stone, round which grew a few fine birch trees. In short, nature had intended the spot for *pic-nics*. There was fine water, and an interesting tradition; and as the parties always bring, or always should bring, a trained punster, champagne, and cold pasties, what more ought nature to have provided?

"Come, Mrs. Lorraine, I will tie Gipsy to this ash, and then you and I will rest ourselves beneath these birch trees, just where the fairies dance."

"O, delightful!"

"Now, truly, we should have some book of beautiful poetry to while away an hour. You will blame me for not bringing one. Do not. I would sooner listen to your voice; and, indeed, there is a subject on which I wish to ask your particular advice."

"Is there?"

"I have been thinking that this is a somewhat rash step of the marquess—this throwing himself into the arms of his former bitterest enemy, Cleveland."

"You really think so?"

"Why, Mrs. Lorraine, does it appear to you to be the most prudent course of action which could have been conceived?"

"Certainly not."

"You agree with me, then, that there is, if not cause for regret at this engagement, at least for reflection on its probable consequences."

"I quite agree with you."

"I know you do. I have had some conversation with the marquess upon this subject, this very morning."

"Have you?" eagerly exclaimed the lady, and she looked pale and breathed short.

"Ay, and he tells me you have made some very sensible observations on the subject. 'Tis a pity they were not made before Mr. Cleveland left, the mischief might then have been prevented."

"I certainly have made some observations."

"And very kind of you; what a blessing for the marquess to have such a friend."

"I spoke to him," said Mrs. Felix, with a more assured tone, "in much the same spirit as you have been addressing me. It does, indeed, seem a most imprudent act, and I thought it my duty to tell him so."

"Ay, no doubt; but how came you, lady, to imagine that I was also a person to be dreaded by his lordship—I, Vivian Grey?"

"Did I say you?" asked the lady, pale as death—

"Did you not, Mrs. Felix Lorraine? Have you not, regardless to my interests, in the most unwarrantable and unjustifiable manner—have you not, to gratify some private pique which you entertain against Mr. Cleveland, have you not, I ask you, poisoned the marquess's mind against one who never did ought to you, but what was kind and honourable?"

"I have been imprudent—I confess it—I have spoken somewhat loosely."

"Now, madam, listen to me once more," and Vivian grasped her hand—"What has passed between you and Mr. Cleveland, it is not for me to inquire—I give you my word of honour, that he never even mentioned your name to me. I can scarcely understand how any man could have incurred the deadly hatred which you appear to entertain for him. I repeat, I can contemplate no situation in which you could be placed together, which would justify such behaviour. It could not be justified, even if he had spurned you while kneeling at his feet."

Mrs. Felix Lorraine shrieked and fainted. A sprinkling from the fairy stream soon recovered her. "Spare me! spare me!" she faintly cried: "do not expose me."

"Mrs. Lorraine, I have no wish. I have spoken thus explicitly, that we may not again misunderstand each other—I have spoken thus explicitly, I say, that I may not be under the necessity of speaking again, for if I speak again, it must not be to Mrs. Felix Lorraine—there is my hand, and now let the Elfin's Well be blotted out of our memories."

Vivian drove rapidly home and endeavoured to talk in his usual tone, and with his usual spirit;

companion could not be excited. Once, she pressed his hand, and as he assisted the phaeton, she murmured something blessing. She ran up stairs immediately. had to give some directions about the Gypsy was ill, or Fanny had a cold, or of the kind, and so he was detained for quarter of an hour before the house, most learnedly to grooms, and consulting with a skilled gravity worthy of professor

he entered the parlour he found the prepared, and Mrs. Felix pressed him neatly to take some refreshment. He was reared, and agreed to take a glass of hock

er. "me mix it for you," said Mrs. Felix; "do sugar?"

with his drive, Vivian Grey was leaning rattle-piece, with his eyes vacantly gazing looking-glass which rested on the marble was by pure accident that, reflected in the he distinctly beheld Mrs. Felix Lorraine small silver box, and throw some powder tumbler which she was preparing for him. leaning down, with her back almost o the glass, but still Vivian saw it—dis-

A sickness came over him, and ere he over himself, his Hebe tapped him on the

drink, drink while it is effervescent."

not drink," said Vivian, "I am not I am too hot—I am any thing—"

foolish you are! it will be quite spoiled." no, the dog shall have it. Here Fidele, thirsty enough—come here—"

Grey, I do not mix tumblers for dogs," lady, rather agitated: "if you will not and she held it once more before him, goes forever." So saying she emptied ler into a large globe of glass, in which d and silver fishes were swimming their ounds.

CHAPTER V.

THE CONVERSATION.

ast specimen of Mrs. Felix Lorraine was t too much, even for the steeled nerves t Grey, and he sought his chamber for

possible? Can I believe my senses? Or demon, as we read of it in old tales, re in a magic mirror? I can believe in s.—O! my heart is very sick! I once that I was using this woman for my Is it possible that aught of good can one who is forced to make use of such uments as these? A horrible thought comes over my spirit. I fancy, that in erious foreigner, that in this woman, I a kind of *double* of myself. The same knowledge of the human mind, the retness of voice, the same miraculous ent which has brought us both under the : yet do I find her the most abandoned ngs; a creature guilty of that, which, his guilty age, I thought was obsolete. possible that I am like her? that I can

resemble her? that even the indefinite shadow of my most unhallowed thought can, for a moment, be as vile as her righteousness? O, God! the system of my existence seems to stop; I cannot breathe." He flung himself upon his bed, and felt for a moment as if he had quaffed the poisoning draught so lately offered.

"It is not so—it cannot be so—it shall not be so!

In seeking the marquess, I was unquestionably impelled by a mere feeling of self-interest; but I have advised him to no course of action, in which his welfare is not equally consulted with my own. Indeed, if not principle, interest would make me act faithfully towards him, for my fortunes are bound up in his. But am I entitled—I, who can lose nothing—am I entitled to play with other men's fortunes? Am I, all this time, deceiving myself with some wretched sophistry? Am I then an intellectual Don Juan, reckless of human minds as he was of human bodies—a spiritual libertine! But why this wild declamation? Whatever I have done, it is too late to recode; even at this very moment *delay is destruction*, for now it is not a question as to the ultimate prosperity of our worldly prospects, but the immediate safety of our very bodies. Poison! O, God! O, God! Away with all fear—all repentance—all thought of past—all reckoning of future. If I am the Juan that I fancied myself, then, Heaven be praised! I have a confidant in all my trouble, the most faithful of counsellors; the craftiest of valets; a Leporello often tried, and never found wanting—my own good mind. And now, thou female fiend! the battle is to the strongest; and I see right well, that the struggle between two such spirits will be a long and fearful one. Wo, I say, to the vanquished! You must be dealt with by arts which even yourself cannot conceive. Your boasted knowledge of human nature shall not again stand you in stead; for, mark me from henceforward, Vivian Grey's conduct towards you shall have no precedent in human nature."

As Vivian re-entered the dressing-room, he met a servant carrying in the globe of gold and silver fishes.

"What, still in your pelisse, Mrs. Lorraine?" said Vivian. "Nay, I hardly wonder at it, for surely a prettier pelisse never yet fitted prettier form. You have certainly a most admirable taste in dress; and this the more surprises me, for it is generally your plain personage that is the most *recherché* in frills, and fans, and flounces."

The lady smiled.

"O! by-the-by," continued her companion, "I've a letter from Cleveland this morning. I wonder how any misunderstanding could possibly have existed between you, for he speaks of you in such terms."

"What does he say?" was the quick question.

"O, what does he say?" drawled out Vivian; and he yawned and was most provokingly uncommunicative.

"Come, come, Mr. Grey, do tell me."

"O! tell you—certainly. Come, let us walk together in the conservatory;" so saying, he took the lady by the hand and they left the room.

"And now for the letter, Mr. Grey!"

"Ay, now for the letter!" and Vivian slowly drew an epistle from his pocket, and therefrom read some exceedingly sweet passages, which made Mrs. Felix Lorraine's very heart's blood tingle. Considering that Vivian Grey had never in his life

received a single letter from Mr. Cleveland, this was tolerably well: but he was always an admirable improvisatore!

"I am sure that when Cleveland comes to town every thing will be explained; I am sure, at least, that it will not be my fault if you are not the best friends. I am heroic in saying all this, Mrs. Lorraine; there was a time when—(and here Vivian seemed so agitated that he could scarcely proceed)—there was a time when I could have called that man—*liar*! who would have prophesied that Vivian Grey could have assisted another in riveting the affections of Mrs. Felix Lorraine;—but enough of this. I am a weak, inexperienced boy, and misinterpret, perhaps, that which is merely a compassionate kindness natural to all women, into a feeling of a higher nature. But, I must learn to contain myself; I really do feel quite ashamed of my behaviour about the tumbler to-day: to act with such unwarrantable unkindness, merely because I had remembered that you once performed the same kind office for Colonel Delmington, was indeed too bad!"

"Colonel Delmington is a vain, empty-headed fool. Do not think of him, my dear Mr. Grey," said Mrs. Felix, with a countenance beaming with smiles.

"Well, I will not; and I'll try to behave like a man; like a man of the world, I should say: but indeed you must excuse the warm feelings of a youth: and truly, when I call to mind the first days of our acquaintance, and then remember that our moonlit walks are gone forever—and that our—"

"Nay, do not believe so, my dear Vivian; believe me, as I ever shall be your friend, your—"

"I will, I will, my dear, my own Amelia!"

CHAPTER VI.

THE LONG GALLERY.

It was an autumnal night—the wind was capricious and changeable as a pretty beauty, or an Italian greyhound, or a shot silk. Now the breeze blew so fresh, that the white clouds dashed along the sky, as if they bore a band of witches too late for their Sabbath meeting—or some other mischief: and now, lulled and soft as the breath of a slumbering infant, you might almost have fancied it midsummer's eve; and the bright moon, with her starry court, reigned undisturbed in the light blue sky. Vivian Grey was leaning against an old beech tree in the most secluded part of the park and was gazing on the moon.

"O! thou bright moon! thou object of my first love! thou shalt not escape an invocation, although, perchance at this very moment, some varlet sonneteer is prating of 'thy boy Endymion,' and 'thy silver bow.' Here to thee, queen of the night! in whatever name thou most delightest! or Bendis, as they hailed you in rugged Thrace; or Bubastis, as they howled to you in mysterious Egypt; or Dian, as they sacrificed to you in gorgeous Rome; or Artemis, as they sighed to you on the bright plains of ever glorious Greece! Why is it, that all men gaze on thee! Why is it, that all men love thee! Why is it, that all men worship thee!

"Shine on, shine on, sultana of the soul! the passions are thy cunuch slaves; Ambition gazes on thee, and his burning brow is cooled, and his sinful pulse is calm. Grief wanders in her moonlit walk, and sheds no tear; and when your crescent smiles, the lustre of Joy's revelling eye is dimmed. Quick Anger, in your light, forgets revenge: and even dove-eyed Hope feeds on no future joys, when gazing on the miracle of thy beauty.

"Shine on, shine on! although a pure virgin, thou art the mighty mother of all abstraction! The eye of the weary peasant, returning from his daily toil, and the rapt gaze of the inspired poet, are alike fixed on thee; thou stillest the roar of marching armies; and who can doubt thy influence o'er the waves, who has witnessed the wide Atlantic sleeping under thy silver beams!

"Shine on, shine on! they say thou art earth's satellite! yet when I do gaze on thee, my thoughts are not of thy Suzerain. They teach us that thy power is a fable, and that thy divinity is a dream. O, thou bright queen! I will be no traitor to thy sweet authority; and, verily, I will not believe that thy influence o'er our hearts, is, at this moment, less potent, than when we worshipped in thy glistering fane of Ephesus, or trembled at the dark horrors of thine Atrian rites. Then, hail to thee, queen of night! Hail to thee, Diana, Triformis, Cynthia, Orthia, Taurica, ever mighty, ever lovely, ever holy! hail! hail! hail!"

If I were a metaphysician, I would tell you why Vivian Grey had been gazing two hours on the moon, for I could then present you with a most logical programme of the march of his ideas, since he whispered his last honeyed speech in the ear of Mrs. Felix Lorraine, at dinner time, until this very moment, when he did not even remember that such a being as Mrs. Felix Lorraine breathed. Glory to the metaphysician's all perfect theory! When they can tell me why, at a bright banquet, the thought of death has flashed across my mind, who fear not death; when they can tell me why, at the burial of my beloved friend, when my very heart-strings seemed bursting, my sorrow has been mocked by the involuntary remembrance of ludicrous adventures and grotesque tales; when they can tell me why, in a dark mountain pass, I have thought of an absent woman's eyes; or why, when in the very act of squeezing the third lime into a beaker of Burgundy cup, my memory hath been of lean apothecaries and their vile drugs!—why, then, I say again, glory to the metaphysician's all perfect theory! and fare-you-well, sweet world, and you, my merry masters, whom, perhaps, I have studied somewhat too cunningly: *nonne sapientem* shall be my motto. I'll doff my travelling cap, and on with the monk's cowl.

There are mysterious moments in some men's lives, when the faces of human beings are very agony to them, and when the sound of the human voice is jarring as discordant music. These are not the consequence of violent or contending passions; they grow not out of sorrow, nor joy, nor hope, nor fear, nor hatred, nor despair. For in the hour of affliction, the tones of our fellow-creatures are ravishing as the most delicate lust; and in the flush moment of joy, where is the smile who loves not a witness to his revelry, or a listener to his good fortune! Fear makes us feel our humanity, and then we fly to men, and hope is the parent of kindness. The misanthrope and the

klens are neither agitated nor agonized. It is these moments that men find in nature that ageniiality of spirit which they seek for in vain their own species. It is in these moments that sit by the side of a waterfall, and listen to its music the livelong day. It is in these moments that we gaze upon the moon. It is in these moments that nature becomes our Egeria; and refreshed and renovated by this beautiful communion, return to the world, better enabled to fight our rts in the hot war of passions, to perform the set duties for which man appears to have been sated,—to love, to hate, to slander, and to slay.

It was past midnight, and Vivian was at a considerable distance from the chateau. He proposed ttering by a side-door, which led into the billiard-room, and from thence crossing the long gallery, could easily reach his apartments without disturbing any of the household. His way led through a little gate at which he had parted with Mrs. Lorraine on the first day of their meeting.

As he softly opened the door which led into the ng gallery, he found he was not alone; leaning ainst one of the casements was a female. Her ofile was to Vivian as he entered, and the moon, hich shone bright through the window, lit up a countenance which he might be excused for not immediately recognising as that of Mrs. Felix Lorraine. She was gazing steadfastly, but her eye did t seem fixed upon any particular object. Her atures appeared convulsed, but their contortions are not momentary, and, pale as death, a hideous in seemed chiselled on her idiot countenance.

Vivian scarcely knew whether to stay or to retire. eirous not to disturb her, he determined not even breathe; and, as is generally the case, his very ertions to be silent made him nervous; and to ve himself from being stifled, he coughed.

Mrs. Lorraine immediately started, and stared idly around her; and when her eye caught Vi-am's, there was a sound in her throat something to the death-rattle.

"Who are you?" she eagerly asked.

"A friend, and Vivian Grey."

"Grey! how came you here?" and she rushed rward and wildly seized his hand—and then she uttered to herself, "'tis flesh—'tis flesh."

"I have been playing, I fear, the mooncalf to-ight; and find that, though I am a late watcher, am not a solitary one."

Mrs. Lorraine stared earnestly at him, and then e endeavoured to assume her usual expression f countenance: but the effort was too much for r. She dropped Vivian's arm, and buried her ee in her own hands. Vivian was retiring, when e again looked up. "Where are you going?" e asked, with a quick voice.

"To sleep—as I would advise all: 'tis much et midnight."

"Thou sayest not the truth. The brightness f your eye belies the sentence of your tongue. ou are not for sleep."

"Pardon me, my dear Mrs. Lorraine, I really ve been gaping for the last hour," said Vivian, d he moved on.

"Mr. Grey! you are speaking to one who takes r answer from the eye, which does not deceive, d from the speaking lineaments of the face, hich are truth's witnesses. Keep your voice for ose who can credit man's words. You will go, en. What! are you afraid of a woman, because

'tis past midnight,' and you're in an old gal- lery?"

"Fear, Mrs. Lorraine, is not a word in my vo- cabulary."

"The words in thy vocabulary are few, boy! as are the years of thine age. He who sent you here this night sent you here not to slumber. Come hither!" and she led Vivian to the window: "wha see you?"

"I see nature at rest, Mrs. Lorraine; and I would fain follow the example of beasts, birds, and fishes."

"Yet gaze upon this scene one second. See the distant hills, how beautifully their rich covering is tinted with the moonbeam! These nearer fir trees—how radiantly their black skeleton forms are tipped with silver! and the old and thickly foliaged oaks bathed in light! and the purpled lake reflect- ing in its lustrous bosom another heaven! Is it not a fair scene?"

"Beautiful! O, most beautiful!"

"Yet Vivian, where is the being for whom all this beauty existeth! Where is your mighty crea- ture—man! The peasant on his rough couch enjoys perchance slavery's only service—money— sweet sleep; or, waking in the night, curses at the same time his lot and his lord. And that lord is restless on some downy couch; his night thoughts, not of this sheeny lake and this bright moon, but of some miserable creation of man's artifice, some mighty nothing which nature knows not of, some offspring of her bastard child—society. Why then is nature loveliest when man looks not on her! For whom, then, Vivian Grey, is this scene so fair!"

"For poets, lady; for philosophers; for all those superior spirits who require some relaxation from the world's toils; spirits who only commingle with humanity on the condition that they may some- times commune with nature."

"Superior spirits! say you!" and here they paced the gallery. "When Valerian, first Lord Carabas, raised this fair castle—when, profuse for his posterity, all the genius of Italian art and Italian artists was lavished on this English palace; when the stuffs, and statues, the marbles, and the mirrors, the tapestry, and the carvings, and the paintings of Genoa, and Florence, and Venice, and Padua, and Vicenza, were obtained by him at miraculous cost, and with still more miraculous toil; what think you would have been his sensations, if, while his soul was revelling in the futurity of his descendants keeping their state in this splendid pile, some wizard had foretold to him, that ere three centuries could elapse, the fortunes of his mighty family would be the sport of two individuals; one of them a foreigner, unconnected in blood, or connected only in hatred; and the other a young adventurer, alike unconnected with his race, in blood, or in love! a being ruling all things by the power of his own genius, and reckless of all consequences, save his own prosperity. If the future had been revealed to my great ancestor, the Lord Valerian, think you, Vivian Grey, that we should have been walking in this long gallery!"

"Really, Mrs. Lorraine, I have been so interest- ed in discovering what people think in the nine- teenth century, that I have but little time to speculate on the possible opinions of an old gentle- man who flourished in the sixteenth."

"You may sneer, sir; but I ask you, if there are

spirits so superior to that of the slumbering lord of this castle, as those of Vivian Grey and Amelia Lorraine; why may there not be spirits proportionately superior to our own?"

"If you are keeping me from my bed, Mrs. Lorraine, merely to lecture my conceit by proving that there are in this world wiser heads than that of Vivian Grey, on my honour, madam, you are giving yourself a great deal of unnecessary trouble."

"You *will* misunderstand me, then, thou wilful boy!"

"Nay, lady, I will not affect to misunderstand your meaning; but I recognise, you know full well, no intermediate essence between my own good soul, and that ineffable and omnipotent Spirit, in whose existence philosophers and priests alike agree."

"Omnipotent and ineffable essence! O! leave such words to scholars, and to schoolboys! And think you, that such indefinite nothings, such unmeaning abstractions, can influence beings whose veins are full of blood, bubbling like this!" And here she grasped Vivian with a feverish hand—"Omnipotent and ineffable essence! O! I have lived in a land, where every mountain, and every stream, and every ruin, has its legend, and its peculiar spirit; a land, in whose dark forests, the midnight hunter, with his spirit-shout, scares the slumbers of the trembling serf; a land from whose winding rivers, the fair-haired undine welcomes the belated traveller to her fond and fatal embrace; and you talk to me of omnipotent and ineffable essences! O! miserable mocker! It is not true, Vivian Grey; you are but echoing the world's deceit, and even at this hour of the night, thou dar'st not speak as thou dost think. Thou worshippest no omnipotent and ineffable essence; thou believest in no omnipotent and ineffable essence; shrined in the secret chamber of your soul, there is an image, before which you bow down in adoration, and that image is—*YOURSELF*. And truly when I do gaze upon thy radiant eyes," and here the lady's tone became more terrestrial,—“and truly when I do look upon thy luxuriant curls,” and here the lady's small white hand, played like lightning through Vivian's dark hair,—“and truly when I do remember the beauty of thy all-perfect form, I cannot deem thy self-worship—a false idolatry;” and here the lady's arms were locked round Vivian's neck, and her head rested on his bosom.

"O! Amelia! it would be far better for you to rest here, than to think of that of which the knowledge is vanity."

"Vanity!" shrieked Mrs. Lorraine, and she violently loosed her embrace, and extricated herself from the arm, which, rather in courtesy than in kindness, had been wound round her delicate waist; "vanity! O! if you knew but what I know—O! if you had but seen what I have seen"—and here her voice failed her, and she stood motionless in the moonshine, with averted head and outstretched arms.

"Amelia! this is very madness; for Heaven's sake calm yourself!"

"Calm myself! O! it is madness; very, very madness! 'tis the madness of the fascinated bird; 'tis the madness of the murderer who is voluntarily broken on the wheel; 'tis the madness of the fawn, that gazes with admiration on the lurid glare of the anaconda's eye; 'tis the madness of a woman who flies to the arms of her—*Fate*;" and here she

sprang like a tigress round Vivian's neck, her long light hair bursting from its bands, and clustering down her shoulders.

And here was Vivian Grey, at past midnight, in this old gallery, with this wild woman clinging round his neck. The figures in the ancient tapestry looked living in the moon, and immediately opposite him was one compartment of some old mythological tale, in which were represented, grinning, in grim majesty,—*THE FATES*.

The wind now rose again, and the clouds which had vanished began to reassemble in the heavens. As the blue sky was gradually being covered, the gigantic figures of Clotho, Lachesis, and Atropos became as gradually dimmer and dimmer, and the grasp of Vivian's fearful burden looser and looser. At last the moon was entirely hid, the figures of the Fates vanished, and Mrs. Felix Lorraine sank lifeless into his arms.

Vivian groped his way with difficulty to the nearest window, the very one at which she was leaning when he first entered the gallery. He played with her wild curls; he whispered to her in a voice sweeter than the sweetest serenade; but she only raised her eyes from his breast, and stared wildly at him, and then clung round his neck with, if possible, a tighter grasp.

For nearly half an hour did Vivian stand leaning against the window, with his mystic and motionless companion. At length the wind again fell; there was a break in the sky, and a single star appeared in the midst of the clouds, surrounded with a halo of heaven of azure.

"See there, see there!" the lady cried, and then she unlocked her arms. "What would you give, Vivian Grey, to read that star?"

"Am I more interested in that star, Amelia, than in any other of the bright host?" asked Vivian, with a serious tone, for he thought it necessary to humour his companion.

"Are you *not*? is it not the star of thy destiny?"

"And are you learned in all the learning of the Chaldeans, too, lady?"

"O, no, no, no!" slowly murmured Mrs. Lorraine, and then she started; but Vivian seized her arms, and prevented her from again clasping his neck.

"I must keep these pretty hands close prisoners," he said, smiling, "unless you promise to behave with more moderation. Come, my Amelia! you shall be my instructress! Why am I so interested in this brilliant star?" and holding her hands in one of his, he wound his arm round her waist, and whispered her such words as he thought might calm her troubled spirit. The wildness of her eyes gradually gave way; at length, she raised them to Vivian, with a look of meek tenderness, and her head sunk upon his breast.

"It shines, it shines, it shines, Vivian! glory to thee, and wo to me! Nay, you need not hold my hands, I will not harm you. I cannot—'tis no use. O, Vivian! when we first met, how little did I know to whom I pledged myself!"

"Amelia, forget these wild fancies, estrange yourself from the murky mysticism which has exercised so baneful an influence, not only over your mind, but over the very soul of the land from which you come. Recognise in me only your friend, and leave the other world to those who value it more, or more deserve it. Does not this

in earth contain sufficient of interest and enjoyment?"

"O, Vivian! you speak with a sweet voice, but with a sceptic's spirit. Thou knowest not what I now."

"Tell me then, my Amelia; let me share your secrets, provided they be your sorrows."

"O, Vivian! almost within this hour, and in its park, there has happened that—which—" and ere her voice died, and she looked fearfully round at.

"Nay, fear not, fear not; no one can harm you ere, and no one shall harm you. Rest, rest upon me, and tell me all thy grief."

"I dare not—I cannot tell you."

"Nay, my own love, thou shalt."

"I cannot speak, your eye scares me. Are you looking me? I cannot speak if you look so at me."

"I will not look on you; I will play with your ring hair, and gaze on yonder star. Now, speak to me, my own love."

"O, Vivian! there is a custom in my native land—the world calls it an unhallowed one; you, in our proud spirit, will call it a vain one. But you could not deem it vain, if you were the woman now resting on your bosom. At certain hours of singular nights, and with peculiar ceremonies, which I need not here mention—we do believe, met in a lake or other standing water, fate reveals itself to the solitary votary. O, Vivian! I have been too long a searcher after this fearful science; and this very night, agitated in spirit, I sought yonder water. The wind was in the right direction, and every thing concurred in favouring a most propitious divination. I knelt down to gaze on the lake.

I had always been accustomed to view my own figure performing some future action, or engaged in some future scene of my life. I gazed, but I saw nothing but a brilliant star. I looked up into the heavens, but the star was not there, and the clouds were driving quick across the sky. More than usually agitated by this singular occurrence, I gazed once more; and just at the moment, when, with breathless and fearful expectation, I waited for the revelation of my immediate destiny, there flitted a figure across the water. It was there only for the brief breathing of a second, and as it passed it mocked me."

Here Mrs. Lorraine writhed in Vivian's arms; her features were moulded in the same unnatural expression as when he first entered the gallery, and the hideous grin was again sculptured on her countenance. Her whole frame was in such a state of agitation, that she rose up and down in Vivian's arms: and it was only with the exertion of his whole strength that he could retain her.

"Why, Amelia—this—this was nothing—your own figure."

"No, not my own—it was *yours*!"

Uttering a loud and piercing shriek, which echoed through the winding gallery, she fainted.

Vivian gazed on her in a state of momentary stupefaction, for the extraordinary scene had begun to influence his own nerves. And now he heard the tread of distant feet, and a light shone through the key-hole of the nearest door. The fearful shriek had alarmed some of the household. What was to be done! In desperation Vivian caught suddenly up in his arms, and dashing out of an opposite door, bore her to her chamber.

CHAPTER VII.

SOUTH AMERICAN ORNITHOLOGY.

WHAT is this chapter to be about? Come, I'm inclined to be courteous! You shall choose the subject of it. What shall it be—sentiment or scandal? a love scene, or a lay-sermon—or a lecture on omelettes soufflées? I am sick of the world! Don't be frightened, sweet reader! and, Pearson, bring me a bottle of soda-water! I am sick of the world, and actually am now hesitating whether I shall turn misanthrope, or go to the ancient music. Not that you are to imagine that I am a dissatisfied, disappointed, moody monster, who lectures the stars, and fancies himself Rousseau secundus—not in the least. I am naturally a very amiable individual; but the truth is, I have been suffering the last three weeks under a tremendous attack of bile, and if I chance to touch a quill in this miserable state, why, unfortunately, I have the habit of discharging a little of that ever-to-be abhorred juice. This, therefore, must be my excuse for occasionally appearing to be a little peevish. Far from disliking the world, I am always ready to do its merits the most poetical justice. O! thou beautiful world! thou art a very pleasant thing—to those who know thee not. Pah! I can't get on: and now, on looking in the glass again I do find myself a *keele* yellow under the eyes still, a twitch in the left temple, tongue like snow in a fog, a violent nausea, pulse at one hundred and ten, yet with an appetite of a Bonassus. Another fit of the bile, by all that's sacred—O! thou vile world! now for a libel!

When Vivian awoke in the morning, he found a note upon his pillow.

"Did you hear the horrid shriek last night? It must have disturbed every one. I think it must have been one of the South American birds, which Captain Tropic gave the marchioness. Do not they sometimes favour the world with these nocturnal shriekings! Isn't there a passage in Spix apropos to this! "A——"

"Did you hear the shriek last night, Mr. Grey?" asked the marchioness, as Vivian entered the breakfast-room.

"O yes! Mr. Grey, did you hear the shriek?" asked Miss Graves.

"Who didn't?"

"O! what could it be?" said the marchioness.

"O! what could it be?" said Miss Graves.

"O! what could it be—a cat in the gutter, or a sick cow, or a toad dying to be devoured, Miss Graves."

Always snub toadeys and fed captains. 'Tis only your greenhorns who endeavour to make their way by fawning and cringing to every member of the establishment. It is a miserable mistake. No one likes his dependants to be treated with respect, for such treatment affords an unpleasant contrast to his own conduct. Besides, it makes the toadey's blood unruly. There are three persons, mind you, to be attended to:—my lord, or my lady, as the case may be, (usually the latter,) the pet daughter, and the pet dog. I throw out these hints *en passant*, for my principal objects in writing this work are to amuse myself, and to instruct society. In some future book, probably the twentieth or twenty-fifth, when the plot begins to wear threadbare, and we can afford a digression, I may give a chapter on domestic tactics.

"My dear marchioness," continued Vivian, "see there I've kept my promise—there's your bracelet. How's Julie to-day?"

"O, Julie! poor dear, I hope she's better."

"O, yes, poor Julie! I think she's better."

"I don't know that, Miss Graves," said her ladyship somewhat tartly, not at all approving of a toadey *thinking*. "I'm afraid that scream last night must have disturbed her. O, dear Mr. Grey, I'm afraid she'll be ill again."

Miss Graves looked mournful, and lifted up her eyes and hands to Heaven, but did not dare to speak this time.

"I thought she looked a little heavy about the eyes this morning," said the marchioness, apparently very agitated; "and I've heard from Egla-mour this post; he's not well too—I think everybody's ill now—he's caught a fever going to see the ruins of Pæstum: I wonder why people go to see ruins!"

"I wonder indeed," said Miss Graves; "I never could see anything in a ruin."

"O, dear Grey!" continued the marchioness, "I really am afraid Julie's going to be very ill."

"O! let Miss Graves pull her tail and give her a little mustard seed; she'll be better to-morrow."

"Well, Graves, mind you do what Mr. Grey tells you."

"O! y-e-s, my lady!"

"Mrs. Felix Lorraine," said the marchioness, as that lady entered the room, "you are late to-day; I always reckon upon you as a supporter of an early breakfast at Desir."

"O! I've been half round the park."

"Did you hear the scream, Mrs. Felix?"

"Do you know what it was, marchioness?"

"No—do you?"

"Ay! ay! see the reward of early rising, and a walk before breakfast. It was one of your new American birds, and it has half torn down our aviary."

"One of the new Americans! O, the naughty thing! and it has broke the new fancy wire work?"

Here a little odd-looking, snuffy old man, with a brown scratch wig, who had been very busily employed the whole breakfast-time with a cold game pie, the bones of which Vivian observed him most scientifically pick and polish, laid down his knife and fork, and addressed the marchioness with an air of great interest.

"Pray will your ladyship have the goodness to inform me what bird this is?"

The marchioness looked astonished at any one presuming to ask her a question; and then she drawled, "Vivian, you know everything—tell this gentleman what a bird is."

Now this gentleman was Mr. Mackaw, the most celebrated ornithologist extant, and who had written a treatise on Brazilian parrots, in three volumes folio. He had arrived late at the chateau the preceding night, and, although he had the honour of presenting his letter of introduction to the marquess, this morning was the first time he had been seen by any of the party present, who were of course profoundly ignorant of his character.

"O! we were talking of some South American bird given to the marchioness by the famous Captain Tropic; you know him, perhaps, Bolivar's brother-in-law, or aid-de-camp, or something of that kind:—and which screams so dreadfully at

night, that the whole family is disturbed. The Chowchowntow, it's called—isn't it, Mrs. Lorraine?"

"The Chowchowntow!" said Mr. Mackaw; "I don't know it by that name."

"O! don't you! I dare say we shall find an account of it in Spix, however," said Vivian rising, and taking a volume from the book-case; "ay! here it is—I'll read it to you."

"The Chowchowntow is about five feet seven inches in length, from the point of the bill to the extremity of the claws. Its plumage is of a dingy, yellowish white: its form is elegant, and in its movements, and action, a certain pleasing and graceful dignity is observable; but its head is by no means worthy of the rest of its frame, and the expression of its eye is indicative of the cunning and treachery of its character. The habits of this bird are peculiar: occasionally most easily domesticated, it is apparently sensible of the slightest kindness; but its regard cannot be depended upon, and for the slightest inducement, or with the least irritation, it will fly at its feeder. At other times, it seeks the most perfect solitude, and can only be captured with the greatest skill and perseverance. It generally feeds three times a-day, but its appetite is not rapacious; it sleeps little; is usually on the wing at sunrise, and proves that it stumbles but little in the night by its nocturnal and thrilling shrieks."

"What an extraordinary bird! Is that the bird you meant, Mrs. Felix Lorraine?"

Mr. Mackaw was extremely restless the whole time that Vivian was reading this interesting extract. At last he burst forth with an immense deal of science, and a great want of construction—a want, which scientific men often experience, always excepting those mealy-mouthed professors who lecture "at the Royal," and get patronised by the blues—the Lavoisiers of May fair!

"Chowchowntow, my lady!—five feet seven inches high! Brazilian bird! When I just remind your ladyship that the height of the tallest bird to be found in Brazil,—and in mentioning this fact, I mention nothing hypothetical,—the tallest bird does not stand higher than four feet nine. Chowchowntow! Dr. Spix is a name—accursed traveller—don't remember the passage—most singular bird! Chowchowntow! don't know it by that name. Perhaps, your ladyship isn't aware,—I think you called that gentleman Mr. Grey,—perhaps, Mr. Grey is not aware, that I am Mr. Mackaw—I arrived here late last night—whose work is three volumes folio, on Brazilian Parrots, although I had the honour of seeing his lordship, is, I trust, a sufficient evidence that I am not speaking at random on this subject; and consequently from the lateness of the hour, could not have the honour of being introduced to your ladyship."

"Mr. Mackaw!" thought Vivian, "the dear you are! O! why didn't I say a Columbian cossowary, or a Peruvian penguin, or a Chilian condor, or a Guatemalan goose, or a Mexican masturd—any thing but Brazilian! O! unfortunate Vivian Grey."

The marchioness, who was quite overcome with this scientific appeal, raised her large, beautiful, sleepy eyes, from a delicious compound of French roll and new milk, which she was working up in a Sevres saucer for Julie; and then, as usual, looked to Vivian for assistance.

"Grey, dear! You know every thing, tell Mr. Mackaw about this bird."

"Is there any point on which you differ from Spix in his account of the Chowchowntow, Mr. Mackaw?"

"My dear sir, I don't follow him at all. Dr. Spix is a most excellent man; a most accurate traveller—quite a name—but to be sure, I've only read his work in our own tongue, and I fear from the passage you have just quoted—five feet seven inches high! in Brazil! It must be a most imperfect version. I say that four feet nine is the greatest height I know. I don't speak without some foundation for my statement. The only bird I know about that height is the Paraguay cassowary; which, to be sure, is sometimes found in Brazil. But the description of your bird, Mr. Grey, does not answer that at all. I ought to know. I do not speak at random. The only living specimen of that extraordinary bird, the Paraguay cassowary, in this country, is in my possession. It was sent me by Bonpland; and was given to him by the Dictator of Paraguay himself. I call it, in compliment, *Doctor Francia*. I arrived here so late last night—only saw his lordship—or I would have had it on the lawn this morning."

"O! then, Mr. Mackaw," said Vivian, "that was the bird which screamed last night."

"O, yes! O, yes! Mr. Mackaw," said Mrs. Felix Lorraine.

"Marchioness! marchioness!" continued Vivian, "it's found out. It's Mr. Mackaw's particular friend, his family physician, whom he always travels with, that awoke us all last night."

"Is he a foreigner?" asked the marchioness, looking up.

"My dear Mr. Grey, impossible! the doctor never screams."

"O! Mr. Mackaw, Mr. Mackaw!" said Vivian.

"O! Mr. Mackaw, Mr. Mackaw!" said Mrs. Felix Lorraine.

"I tell you he never screams," reiterated the man of science, "I tell you he can't scream, he's *muzzled*."

"O! then it must have been the Chowchowntow."

"Yes, I think it must have been the Chowchowntow."

"I should very much like to hear Spix's description again," said Mr. Mackaw, "only I fear it's troubling you too much, Mr. Grey."

"Read it yourself, my dear sir," said Vivian, putting the book into his hand, which was the third volume of Tremaine.

Mr. Mackaw looked at the volume, and turned it over, and sideways, and upside downwards: the brain of a man who has written three folios on parrots is soon puzzled. At first he thought the book was a novel; but then, an essay on predestination, under the title of *Memoirs of a Man of Refinement*, rather puzzled him; then he mistook it for an Oxford reprint of Pearson on the Creed; and then he stumbled on rather a warm scene in an old chateau in the south of France.

Before Mr. Mackaw could gain the power of speech, the door opened, and entered—who? Doctor Francia.

Mr. Mackaw's travelling companion possessed the awkward accomplishment of opening doors, and now strutted in, in quest of his beloved master.

Affection for Mr. Mackaw was not, however, the only cause which induced this entrée.

The household of Chateau Desir, unused to cassowaries, had neglected to supply Dr. Francia with his usual breakfast, which consisted of half a dozen pounds of rump steaks, a couple of bars of hard iron, some pig lead, and brown stout. The consequence was, the dictator was sadly famished.

All the ladies screamed; and then Mrs. Felix Lorraine admired the doctor's violet neck, and the marchioness looked with an anxious eye on Julie, and Miss Graves, as in duty bound, with an anxious eye on the marchioness.

There stood the doctor, quite still, with his large yellow eye fixed on Mr. Mackaw. At length he perceived the cold pastry, and his little black wings began to flutter on the surface of his immense body.

"Che, che, che, che!" said the ornithologist, who didn't like the symptoms at all: "Che, che, che, che,—don't be frightened, ladies! you see he's muzzled—che, che, che, che,—now, my dear doctor, now, now, now, Franky, Franky, Franky, now go away, go away, that's a dear doctor—che, che, che, che!"

But the large yellow eye grew more flaming and fiery, and the little black wings grew larger and larger; and now the left leg was dashed to and fro, with a fearful agitation. Mackaw looked agonized. Pop! what a whirr! Francia is on the table! All shriek, the chairs tumble over the ottomans—the Sevre china is in a thousand pieces—the muzzle is torn off and thrown at Miss Graves; Mackaw's wig is dashed in the clotted cream, and devoured on the spot; and the contents of the boiling urn are poured over the beautiful and beloved Julie!

CHAPTER VIII.

THE VIVIAN PAPERS.

MR. COLBURN insists that this is the only title under which I can possibly publish the letters which Vivian Grey received on the — day of —, 18—. I love to be particular in dates.

THE HONOURABLE MISS CYNTHIA COURTTOWN TO VIVIAN GREY, ESQ.

Alburys, Oct. 18.

"DEAR GREY,—We have now been at Alburys for a fortnight. Nothing can be more delightful. Here is everybody in the world that I wish to see, except yourself. The Knights, with as many outriders as usual: Lady Julia and myself are great allies, I like her amazingly. The Marquess of Grandgout arrived here last week, with a most delicious party; all the men who write John Bull. I was rather disappointed at the first sight of Stanislaus Hoax. I had expected, I don't know why, something juvenile, and squibbish—when lo! I was introduced to a corpulent individual, with his coat buttoned up to his chin, looking dull, gentlemanly, and apoplectic. However, on acquaintance he came out quite rich—sings delightful, and improvises like a prophet—ten thousand times more entertaining than Pistrucci. We are sworn friends; and I know all the secret history of John Bull.

There is not much, to be sure, that you didn't tell me yourself; but still there are *some things*. I must not trust them, however, to paper, and therefore pray dash down to Alburys immediately; I shall be most happy to introduce you to Lord Devil-drain. There *was* an interview. What think you of that? Stanislaus told me all, *circumstantially*, and *after dinner*—I don't doubt that it's quite true. What would you give for the secret history of the 'rather yellow, rather yellow,' *chanson*? I dare not tell it you. It came from a quarter that will quite astound you, and in a very elegant, small, female hand. You remember Lambton did stir very awkwardly in the Lisbon business. Stanislaus wrote all the songs that appeared in the first numbers, except that; but he never wrote a single line of prose for the first three months; it all came from Vivida Via.

"I like the Marquess of Grandgout so much! I hope he'll be elevated in the peerage: he looks as if he wanted it so: poor dear man!

"O! do you know I've discovered a *liaison* between Bull and Blackwood? I'm to be in the next Noctes; I forget the words of the chorus exactly, but *Courtoun* is to rhyme with *port down*, or something of that kind, and then they're to dash their glasses over their heads, give three cheers, and adjourn to whisky-toddy and the Chaldee chamber. How delightful!

"The Prima Donnas are at Cheltenham, looking most respectable. Do you ever see the Age! It is not proper for me to take it in. Pray send me down your numbers, and tell me all about it; that's a dear. Is it true that his lordship paraphrases a little?

"I have not heard from Ernest Clay, which I think very odd. If you write to him, mention this, and tell him to send me word how Dormer Stanhope behaves at mess. I understand there has been a *melée*, not much—merely a *roulette*: do get it all out of him.

"Colonel Delmington is at Cheltenham, with the most knowing beard you can possibly conceive; Lady Julia rather patronises him. Lady Doubtful has been turned out of the rooms; fifty challenges in consequence, and one duel; missed fire, of course.

"I have heard from Alhambra; he has been wandering about in all directions. He has been to the Lakes, and is now at Edinburgh. He likes Southey. He gave the laureate a quantity of hints for his next volume of the Peninsular War, but does not speak very warmly of Wordsworth, gentlemanly man, but only reads his own poetry. I made him promise to go and see De Quincy; and, like a good boy, he did; but he says he's a complete humbug. What can he mean! He stayed some days at Sir Walter's and met Tom Moore. Singular, that our three great poets should be together this summer! He speaks in raptures of the great baronet, and of the beauties of Abbotsford. He met Tom Moore again in Edinburgh, and was present at the interview between him and Hogg. Lalla Rookh did not much like being called 'Tam Muir,' and rather kicked at the shepherd.

"Edinburgh is more delightful than you can possibly conceive. I certainly intend to go next summer. Alhambra is very intimate with John Wilson, who seems indeed a first-rate fellow, full of fun and genius; and quite as brilliant a hand at a comic song, as at a tragic drama. Do you *know* it struck me the other day, that comic song

and tragedies are 'the lights and shadows' of literature. Pretty idea, is it not?

"Here has been a cousin of yours about us; a young barrister going the circuit, by name Hargrave Grey. The name attracted my notice, and due inquiries having been made, and satisfactorily answered, I patronised the limb of law. Fortunate for him! I got him to all the fancy balls and pic-nics that were going on. He was in heaven for a fortnight, and at length, having overstayed his time, he left us, also leaving his bag and only brief behind him. They say he's ruined for life. Write soon.

"Yours, ever,

"CYTHIA COURTOWN."

ERNEST CLAY, ESQ., TO VIVIAN GREY, ESQ.

"October —, 18—.

"DEAR GREY!—I am sick of key-bugles and country balls! All the girls in town are in lows with me—or my foraging cap. I am very much obliged to you for your letter to Kennet, which procured every thing I wanted. The family turned out *bored*, as you had prepared me. I never met such a clever family in my life; the father is summoning up courage to favour the world with a volume of sermons; both the sons have had sonnets refused by the London magazines; and Isabella Kennet most satisfactorily proved to me, after an argument of two hours, which, for courtesy's sake, I fought very manfully, that Sir Walter Scott was not the author of Waverley; and then she vowed, as I have heard fifty other young literary ladies vow before, that she had 'seen the Antiquary in manuscript.'

"There has been a slight row to diversify the monotony of our military life. Young Premium, the son of the celebrated loan-monger, has bought in; and Dormer Stanhope, and one or two others equally fresh, immediately anticipated another Battrier business; but with the greatest desire to make a fool of myself, I have a natural repugnance to mimicking the foolery of others; so with some little exertion, and very fortunately for young Premium, I got the tenth voted vulgar, on the score of curiosity, and we were civil to the man. As it turned out, it was all very well, for Premium is a quiet gentlemanly fellow enough, and exceedingly useful. He'll keep extra grooms for the whole mess, if they want it. He's very grateful to me for what does not deserve any gratitude, and for what gave me no trouble; for I did not defend him from any feeling of kindness. And both the Mounteneys, and young Stapyhton Toad, and Augustus, being in the regiment, why, I've very little trouble in commanding a majority, if it come to a division.

"I dined the other day at old Premium's, who lives near this town in a magnificent old hall, which, however, is not near splendid enough for a man who is the creditor of every nation from California to China; and, consequently, the great Mr. Stucco is building a plaster castle for him in another part of the park. Glad am I enough, that I was prevailed upon to patronise the Premium; for I think I never witnessed a more singular scene than I did the day I dined there.

"I was ushered through an actual street of servants, whose liveries were really cloth of gold, and whose elaborately powdered heads would not have disgraced the most ancient mansion in St.

into a large and very crowded saloon, received with the most derision; and the ear of Mrs. to dwell upon the jingling of my adjutant,) as upon the most ext- it was *bona fide* evidence of 'the ere.' She'll now be visited by y.

a short, but by no means vulgar-out fifty, with a high forehead ikles, and with eyes deeply sunk never met a man of apparently a cooler temperament. He was rivation from his very unobtrusive, I immediately perceived, a foreigners in the room. They knowing for Arguelles and Co., that they were members of the s, or missions of the various gov- se infant existence Premium is ere were two very striking figures ie, who were shown to me as the not that you are to imagine that ar in this picturesque dress. It ticular favour, and to please Miss . Grey, my boy! there's a quarry! ous envoys appeared habited, this onal costume.

room would have enjoyed the scene. room was a naval officer, just hot Mexico, and lecturing eloquently the Cordillera. In another, was dilating on the miraculous pow- iscovered amalgamation process, hants, who, with bent brows and already forming a company for re floated the latest anecdote of re a murmur of some new move- 'a. And then the perpetual bab- states,' and 'new loans,' and 'en- and 'junctions of the two oceans,' ples,' and 'steamboats to Mexico,' ook which every one had in the different to the vacant gaze that ustomed to! I was really par- / this circumstance. Every one ed full of some great plan; as aires was on his very breath. I ther they were most like conspi- s, or the lions of a public dinner, niversal gaze, and consequently ately interesting. One circum- / struck me: as I was watching ance of an individual, who young d me was the Chilean minister, ening with great attention to a Captain Tropic, the celebrated feasibility of a railroad over the d a very great sensation among ne; every one shifting, and shuf- and assisting in that curious and ny, called *making way*. Even d a little excited, when he came ile on his face, to receive an in- ly a foreigner, and who stepped ough gracious dignity. Being now who this great man was, I as an *ambassador*—the represen- ised state.

our, when I saw all this, I could moralizing on the magic of

wealth, and when I just remember the embryo plot of some young huzzar officers to *cut* the son of the magician, I rather smiled; but while I, with even greater reverence than all others, was making way for his *excellency*, I observed Mrs. Premium looking at my spurs—'Farewell, Philosophy!' thought I, 'puppyism for ever!'

"Dinner was at last announced, and the nice etiquette which was observed between *recognised* states and *non-recognised* states, was really excessively amusing: not only the ambassador would take precedence of the mere political agent, but his excellency's private secretary was equally tenacious as to the agent's private secretary. At length we were all seated:—the spacious dining-room was hung round with portraits of the most of the *successful* revolutionary leaders, and over Mr. Premium was suspended a magnificent portrait of Bolivar. O! Grey, if you could but have seen the plate! By Jove! I have eaten off the silver of most of the first families in England, yet, never in my life, did it enter into my imagination, that it was possible for the most ingenious artist that ever existed, to repeat a crest half so often in a table spoon, as in that of Premium. The crest is a bubble, and really the effect produced by it is most ludicrous.

"I was very much struck at table, by the appearance of an individual who came in very late, but who was evidently, by his bearing, no insignificant personage. He was a tall man, with a long hooked nose, and high cheek bones, and with an eye—(were you ever at the Old Bailey? there you may see its fellow;)—his complexion looked as if it had been accustomed to the breezes of many climes; and his hair, which had once been red, was now silvered, or rather iron-grayed, not by age. Yet there were in his whole bearing, in his slightest actions, even in the easy, desperate air with which he took a glass of wine, an indefinable—something (you know what I mean) which attracted your unremitting attention to him. I was not wrong in my suspicions of his celebrity; for, as Miss Premium, whom I sat next to, (eh! Grey, my boy, how are you? 'tis a very fine thing for a father-in-law,' &c., &c.,) whispered, 'he was quite a lion.' It was Lord Oceanville. What he is after, no one knows. Some say he is going to Greece, others whisper an invasion of Paraguay, and others of course say other things, perhaps equally correct. I think he's for Greece. I know he's the most extraordinary man I ever met with. I'm getting prosy. Good b'ye! Write soon. Any fun going on? How is Cynthia? I ought to have written. How's Mrs. Felix Lorraine? she's a d—d odd woman!

"Yours, faithfully,

"ERNEST CLAY."

MR. DANIEL GROVES TO VIVIAN GREY, ESQ.

"SIR,—I have just seen Sir Hanway, who gave me a letter from you, requesting me to furnish you with my ideas on the state of the agricultural interest; and to think of John Conyers for the farm of Maresfield, now vacant.

"With respect to the former, I can't help thinking ministers remarkable wrong on the point of the game laws particularly, to say nothing of the duty on felled timber, malt, and brown mustard. 'Tayn't the greatness of the duty that makes the increase of the revenue. That's my maxim.

"As to Maresfield, I certainly had an eye to it for my second son, William, as my mistress says, he's now getting fittish to look out for himself in the world—and then there's my nephew at Edgecombe, the son of my sister Mary, who married one of the Wrights at Upton, and I always promised old Mr. Wright to see Tom well done by. That's the ground I stand upon. But, certainly, to oblige your honour, I can't say but what I'll think of it.

"Sir Hanway says, Conyers told him that Whitefooted Moll died on Wednesday. She was, as your honour always said, a pretty creature. Talking of this, puts me in mind, that if your honour comes in for Mounteney, which they're talking of in these parts, I hope you'll say something about the tax on cart-horses. This is the ground I stand upon—if a gentleman keeps a horse for pleasure, it's only right government should have the benefit: but when it's to promote the agricultural interest, my maxim is, it's remarkable wrong to tax 'em all promiscuous.

"As for Conyers, I can't help thinking his cottage might be removed: it stands in the midst of one of the finest pieces of cornland in this country; and I said so the other day to Mr. Stapylton Toad, but he's not a man as'll take advice. That Maresfield farm is a nice bit for game, as I believe your honour well knows. I took out Snowball and Negro the other morning, with young Fletcher of Upton—he's the third cousin of old Mrs. Wright's sister-in-law's niece—we coursed three hares, and killed one just opposite Gunter's on the hill, who's a bit of a relation again on my wife's side; so I just looked in and took a crust of bread and cheese, for civility costs nothing—that's my maxim.

"The new beer bill is felt a grievance—John Sandys says as my men won't be satisfied with less than ten strike to the hogshcad; this is remarkable wrong. So you may make your mind easy about John Conyers: I've been talking to my mistress, and the upshot of it is, that I'll take my old horse and ride over to Stapylton Toad and settle with him about the removal; and if I can give you any more information on this point, or any thing else relating to our part of the world, or the corn-laws in general, I shall be very happy to remain

"Your honour's obedient servant,

"DANIEL GROVES.

"P. S. The half pipe of port wine I told you of is come in, and I think it promises to be as good sterling stuff as ever you need wish to taste—some body in it—none of your French vinegary slip-slop. Depend on't, port's the wine for Englishmen—there's some stamina in it: that's the ground I stand upon."

MARGRAVE GREY, ESQ., TO VIVIAN GREY, ESQ.

"October —, 17—.

"DEAR VIVIAN,—You ought not to expect a letter from me. I cannot conceive why you do not occasionally answer your correspondents' letters, if correspondents they may be called. 'It is really a most unreasonable habit of yours; any one but myself would quarrel with you.

"A letter from Baker met me at this place, and I find that the whole of that most disagreeable and annoying business is arranged. From the promptitude, skill, and energy, which are apparent in the whole affair, I suspect I have to thank the very

gentleman, whom I was just going to quarrel with. You're a good fellow, Vivian, after all. For want of a brief, I sit down to give you a sketch of adventures on this my first circuit.

"This circuit is a cold and mercantile adventure and I'm disappointed in it. Not so either, for I looked for but little to enjoy. Take one day of a life as a specimen; the rest are mostly alike. The sheriff's trumpets are playing,—one, some tune of which I know nothing, and the other no tune at all. I'm obliged to turn out at eight. It is the first day of the assize, so there is some chance of a brief, being a new place. I push my way into court through files of attorneys, as civil to the rogues as possible, assuring them there is plenty of room, though I am at the very moment gasping for breath, wedged in a lane of well lined waistcoats. I get into court, take my place in the quietest corner, and there I sit, and pass other men's fees and briefs like a twopenny postman only without pay. Well! 'tis six o'clock—linner time—at the bottom of the table—carve for all—speak to none—nobody speaks to me—must wait till late to sum up, and pay the bill. Reach home quite devoured by spleen, after having heard every one abused, who happened to be absent.

"You wished me many briefs, but only one of your wishes have come to pass, and that at this place; but I flatter myself I got up the law of the case in a most masterly style; and I am sure you will allow me to be capable of so doing, when I relate the particulars:—

"Indictment states, that prisoner, on, &c. &c., from out of a certain larder, stole a pork pie.

"2d count—a meat pie.

"3d count—a pie in general.

"The great question was, whether the offence was complete or not, the felon not having carried it out of the larder, but only conveyed it into his own pocket:—that is, all he could not eat.

"Plea:—he was hungry.

"Per Bolter Baron.—'He must not satisfy his appetite at another person's expense, so let him be whipped, and discharged; and let the treasurer of the county pay the expenses of this prosecution. Which were accordingly allowed, to the amount of something under fifty pounds.

"Don't turn up the whites of your eyes, Vivian; and, in the fulness of your indignation, threaten me with all the horrors of parliamentary interference. The fact is, on this circuit, to judge of the number of offences tried, such a theft is as enormous as a burglary, with one or two throats cut, in London; for pork pies are the staple of the county: and they export them by canal to all parts of the world, whereto the canals run, which the natives imagine to be to parts beyond seas at least.

"I travelled to this place with Manners, whom I believe you know, and amused myself by getting from him an account of my fellows, anticipating at the same time, what in fact happened:—to wit, that I should afterwards get his character from them. It is strange how freely they deal with each other—that is, the person spoken of being away. I would not have had you see our Squire hope for half a hundred pounds: your jealousy would have been so excited. To say the truth, we are a little rough;—our mane wants pulling and our hoofs trimming, but we jog along without performing either operation: and, by dint of raising the whip against the splash-board, using all our

and and voice, and jerking the bit e do contrive to get into the circuit-just about the time that the sheriff *comitatus* are starting to meet my justice:—and that is the worst of it; are prancing and pawing coursers e stable,—sleek skins and smart begin to be knocked up just then, rance is the least brilliant of any

Here I had to pass through a host ed, scented fops; and the multitude ible to gaze on the nobler exhibi-ffed at our humble vehicle. As ust then been set down to find the g, I could not jump out and leave its fate, so I settled my cravat, and mind it—only *I did*.

as just come in, and insists upon ie theatre with him. I shall keep her post, to tell you whether I re-etter from Baker, at ——d!

rom Baker, but I find it so dull t with nothing to do, that I shall t a few more lines from myself. ce last night was rather amusing: et turned into a melo-drame, to suit icinity. The nasal tones of Juliet's e-scenes, must have been peculiarly Romeo, but to that for whom they they seemed so much in earnest, ive been quite enraptured. There eetings. Juliet entered fully into e poet; and hung about his neck, ip— all like life, to the great edifi- dience assembled; which, as it was s a very brilliant one. In such a must necessarily be economy used d actresses. Thus, as Mercutio is e first act, he afterwards performs the Friar himself figures as the e masquerade: but I was most overing Juliet's nasal tones in her vonderful idea, never before intro- tage. I was led to make this dis- ely by the fact of her voice being it from an unfortunate accident at the funeral. As the deceased chief mourner, her beloved corpse med by a bundle of rags, or some- d, laid upon a sort of school form, herself and five other ladies in e music was rather quick, and the e perform *pas de zephyr* all round uliet did not keep very good time, as on one side were standing on wards the audience, as nearly in a re as possible; the daughter of r battalion, began performing on and in the consequent scuffle the ! The accident, however, was as, and the procession moved on to o fiddles and one bell. Juliet's g little parlour with blue panels, nk gin instead of poison, which t have surely intended, or else it f nature to make Juliet exclaim, ot left one drop!

eave off this nonsense, and attend e charge, which is now about to ave not been able to get you a der, although I have kept a sharp

look out as you desired me; but there's a chance of a first-rate one at ——n.

"I am quite delighted with Mr. Justice St. Prose. He is at this moment in a most entertaining passion, preparatory to a '*conscientious*' summing up; and in order that his ideas may not be disturbed, he has very liberally ordered the door-keeper to have the door oiled immediately, *at his own expense*. Now for my lord the king's justice.

"Gentlemen of the jury!

"The noise is insufferable—the heat is intolerable—the door-keepers let the people keep shuffling in—the ducks in the corner are going quack, quack, quack—here's a little girl being tried for her life, and the judge can't hear a word that's said. Bring me my black cap, and I'll condemn her to death instantly."

"You can't, my lord," shrieks the infant sinner; 'it's only for petty larceny!'

"This is agreeable, is it not? but let us see what the next trial will produce:—this was an action of trespass, for breaking off the pump handle, knocking down the back-kitchen door, spitting on the parlour carpet, and tumbling the maid's head about.

"Plea.—That the defendants, eight in number, entered in aid of the constable, under warrant of a magistrate, to search for stolen goods.

"John Staff, examined by Mr. Shuffleton.

"Well, Mr. Constable, what have you to say about this affair?"

"Why, sir, I charged them men to assist me in the king's name."

"What, eight of you? why, there was only an old woman, and a boy, and the servant girl in the house. You must have been terribly frightened at them, eh?"

"Can't say for that, sir, only they was needful."

"Why, what could you want so many for?"

"Why, you see, sir, I couldn't read the warrant myself, so I charged Abraham Lockit to read it for me; and when he came, he said as it was Squire Jobson's writing, and so he could not, and then I had occasion to charge Simon Lockit, and he read it."

"Well, that's only two: what were the rest for?"

"Why, your honour, they was to keep the women quiet."

"Mr. Justice St. Prose.—Take care what you're about, witness. I consider it my duty to advise you not to laugh; it is, in my opinion, a contempt of court, and I therefore desire you to restrain yourself."

"Mr. Shuffleton.—But you haven't told me why you wanted these other six men."

"Why, the women, d'ye see, sir, was so very unruly in the kitchen; and so I charged them to keep 'em quiet."

"Now, sir, what do you call keeping the women quiet, pulling the maid's cap off, and —?"

"Mr. Justice St. Prose. (To a person opposite.)—You'll excuse me, sir, but I think that those two little gentlemen had better leave the court till this examination is over."

"His lordship 'thought it his duty' to give a similar warning to two very pretty young ladies in pink bonnets and green pelisses. They were, however, so obstinate as to remain in court, until they had heard the whole circumstantial and improper evidence, of the destruction of the maid's cap. When it was all over, his lordship once more fixed

his large eyes on the constable, and thus delivered himself:—

"Now, Mr. Constable, to remove the sting of any remark which may have dropped from me during this trial, I will allow that, very probably, you had reason to laugh.—Mr. Constable looked quite relieved.

"By way of variety, I will give a specimen of his lordship's style of cross-examination.

"Enter a witness with a flourishing pair of whiskers, approximating to a King Charles.

"Mr. Justice St. Prose.—'Pray, sir, who are you?'

"Whiskered witness.—'An architect, my lord.'

"Mr. J. St. Prose.—'An architect! sir; are you not in the army?'

"W. W. (Agitated).—'No, my lord.'

"Mr. J. St. Prose.—'Never were?'

"W. W. (Much browbeat).—'No, my lord.'

"Mr. J. St. Prose.—'Then, sir, what right have you to wear those whiskers? I consider that you can't be a respectable young man, and I shan't allow you your expenses.'

"I have just got an invite from the Kearneys. Congratulate me,

"Dear Vivian, yours, faithfully,

"HARGRAVE GREY."

LADY SCROPE TO VIVIAN GREY, ESQ.

"Ormsby Park, Oct. —, 18—.

"MY DEAR VIVIAN,—By desire of Sir Berdmore, (is not this pretty and proper?) I have to request the fulfilment of a promise, upon the hope of which being performed, I have existed through this dull month. Pray, my dear Vivian, come to us immediately. Ormsby has at present little to offer for your entertainment. We have had that unendurable bore, Vivacity Dull, with us for a whole fortnight. A report of the death of the lord chancellor, or a rumour of the production of a new tragedy, has carried him up to town; but whether it be to ask for the seals, or to indite an ingenious prologue to a play which will be condemned the first night, I cannot inform you. I am quite sure he is capable of doing either. However, we shall have other doer in a few days.

"I believe you have never met the Mounteney's—no, I'm sure you have not. They have never been at Hallesbrooke since you have been at Desir. They are coming to us immediately. I am sure you will like them very much. Lord Mounteney is one of those kind, easy-minded, accomplished men, who, after all, are nearly the pleasantest society one ever meets. Rather wild in his youth, but with his estate now unincumbered, and himself perfectly domestic. His lady is an unaffected, agreeable woman. But it is Caroline Mounteney whom I wish you particularly to meet. She is one of those delicious creatures, who, in spite of not being married, are actually conversable, Spirited, without any affectation or brusquerie; beautiful, and knowing enough to be quite conscious of it; and perfectly accomplished, and yet never annoying you with tattle about Rochas, and Ronzi de Begnis, and D'Egville.

"We also expect the Delmonts, the most endurable of the Anglo-Italians that I know. Mrs. Delmont is not always dropping her handkerchief like Lady Gusto, as if she expected a miserable *cavalier servente* to be constantly upon his knees,

or giving those odious expressive looks, which quite destroy my nerves whenever I am under the same roof as that horrible Lady Soprano. There is a little too much talk, to be sure, about Roman churches, and newly-discovered Mosaisms, and Ab-bete Maii, but still we cannot expect perfection. There are reports going about that Ernest Clay is either ruined, going to be married, or about to write a novel.

"Perhaps all are true. Young Premium has nearly lost his character, by driving a square-built, striped green thing, drawn by one horse. Ernest Clay got him through this terrible affair. What can be the reasons of the Sieur Ernest's excessive amiability?

"Both the young Mounteney's are with their regiment, but Aubrey Vere is coming to us, and I've half a promise from—; but I know you never speak to unmarried men, so why do I mention them? Let me, I beseech you, my dear Vivian, have a few days of you to myself, before you are introduced to Caroline Mounteney. I did not think it was possible that I could exist so long without seeing you; but you really must not try me too much, or I shall quarrel with you. I have received all your letters, which are very, very agreeable; but I think rather imprudent. If you don't behave better, I shan't pet you—I shan't indeed; so do not put off coming a single moment. Adieu!

HENRIETTE SCROPE."

HORACE GREY, ESQ., TO VIVIAN GREY, ESQ.

"Paris, Oct. 18—.

"MY DEAR VIVIAN,—I have received your last letter, and have read it with mixed feelings of astonishment and sorrow.

"You are now, my dear son, a member of what is called, *le grand monde*—society formed on anti-social principles. Apparently, you have possessed yourself of the object of your wishes; but the scenes you live in are very movable; the characters you associate with are all masked; and it will always be doubtful, whether you can retain that longer, which has been obtained by some slippery artifice. Vivian, you are a juggler; and the deception of your slight-of-hand tricks depend upon instantaneous motions.

"When the selfish combine with the selfish, bethink you how many projects are doomed to disappointment! how many cross interests baffle the parties, at the same time joined together without ever uniting! What a mockery is their love! but how deadly are their hatreds! All this great society, with whom so young an adventurer has trafficked, abate nothing of their price in the slavery of their service, and the sacrifice of violated feelings. What sleepless nights has it cost you to win over the disobliged, to conciliate the discontented, to cajole the contumacious! You may smile at the hollow flatteries, *suggering* to flatteries as hollow, which, like bubbles when they touch, dissolve into nothing: but tell me, Vivian, what has the self-tormentor felt at the laughing treacheries, which force a man down into self-contempt!

"Is it not obvious, my dear Vivian, that true fame, and true happiness, must rest upon the imperishable social affections? I do not mean that coterie celebrity, which paltry minds accept as fame, but that which exists independent of the opinions, or the intrigues of individuals; nor do I

can that glittering show of perpetual converse with the world, which some miserable wanderers call happiness; but that which can only be drawn from the sacred and solitary fountain of your own slings.

"Active as you have now become in the great concerns of human affairs, I would not have you aided by any fanciful theories of morals or of human nature. Philosophers have amused themselves by deciding on human actions by systems; it as these systems are of the most opposite natures, it is evident that each philosopher, in reflecting his own feelings in the system he has so laborately formed, has only painted his own character.

"Do not, therefore, conclude with Hobbes and Lande ville, that man lives in a state of civil warfare with man; nor with Shaftesbury, adorn with a poetical philosophy our natural feelings. Man is either the vile nor the excellent being which he sometimes imagines himself to be. He does not so much act by system as by sympathy. If this creature cannot always feel for others, he is doomed to feel for himself; and the vicious are, at least, cursed with the curse of remorse.

"You are now inspecting one of the worst portions of society, in what is called the great world; St. Giles's is bad, but of another kind;) and it may be useful, on the principle that the actual sight of brutal ebriety was supposed to have inspired youth with the virtue of temperance, on the same principle that the Platonist, in the study of leformity, conceived the beautiful. Let me warn you not to fall into the usual error of youth, in fancying that the circle you move in is precisely the world itself. Do not imagine that there are not other beings, whose benevolent principle is governed by finer sympathies, by more generous passions, and by those nobler emotions which really constitute all our public and private virtues.

"I give this hint, lest, in your present society, you might suppose these virtues were merely historical.

"Once more I must beseech you not to give scope to any elation of mind. The machinery by which you have attained this unnatural result, must be so complicated, that, in the very tenth hour, you will find yourself stopped in some part where you never counted on an impediment; and the want of a slight screw, or a little oil, will prevent you from accomplishing your magnificent end.

"We are, and have been, very dull here. There is every probability of Madame de Genlis writing more volumes than ever. I called on the old lady, and was quite amused with the enthusiasm of her imbecility. Chateaubriand is getting what you call a bore; and the whole city is mad about a new opera by Boieldieu. Your mother sends her love, and desires me to say, that the *salmi* of woodcocks, à la Lucullus, which you write about, does not differ from the practice here in vogue; but we have been much pleased with ducks, with olive sauce, about which she particularly wishes to consult you. How does your cousin Hargrave prosper on his circuit? The Delmingtons are here, which makes it very pleasant for your mother, as well as for myself; for it allows me to hunt over the old book shops at my leisure. There are no new books worth sending you, or they would accompany this; but I would recommend you to get Meyer's new volume from Treuttel and

Wurtz, and continue to make notes as you read it. Give my compliments to the marquess, and believe me

"Your most affectionate father,

"HORACE GREY."

CHAPTER IX.

THE DEPARTURE.

IT was impossible for any human being to behave with more kindness than the Marquess of Carabas did to Vivian Grey, after that young gentleman's short conversation with Mrs. Felix Lorraine, in the conservatory. The only feeling which seemed to actuate the peer, was an eager desire to compensate, by his present conduct, for any past misunderstanding, and he loaded his young friend with all possible favour. Still Vivian was about to quit Chateau Desir, and in spite of all that had passed, he was extremely loath to leave his noble friend under the guardianship of his female one.

About this time the Duke and Dutchess of Juggernaut, the very pink of aristocracy, the wealthiest, the proudest, the most ancient, and most pompous couple in Christendom, honoured Chateau Desir with their presence for two days; *only two days*, making the marquess's mansion a convenient resting-place in one of their princely castles.

Vivian contrived to gain the heart of her grace, by his minute acquaintance with the Juggernaut pedigree; and having taken the opportunity, in one of their conversations to describe Mrs. Felix Lorraine as the most perfect specimen of divine creation with which he was acquainted, at the same time the most amusing and the most amiable of women, that lady was honoured with an invitation to accompany her grace to HIMALAYA CASTLE. As this was the greatest of all possible honours, and as Desir was now very dull, Mrs. Felix Lorraine accepted the invitation, or rather obeyed the command, for the marquess would not hear of a refusal, Vivian having dilated, in the most energetic terms, on the opening which now presented itself of gaining the Juggernaut. The coast being thus cleared, Vivian set off the next day for Sit Berdmores Scrope's.

BOOK THE FOURTH.

CHAPTER I.

THE important time drew nigh. Christmas was to be passed by the Carabas family, the Beaconsfields, the Scropes, and the Clevelands, at Lord Courtown's villa at Richmond: at which place, on account of its vicinity to the metropolis, the viscount had determined *to make out* the holidays, notwithstanding the Thames entered his kitchen windows, and the Donna del Lago was acted in the theatre with real water—Cynthia Courtown performing Elena, paddling in a punt.

"Let us order our horses, Cleveland, round to the Piccadilly gate, and walk through the guards. I must stretch my legs. That bore, Horace But-tonhole, captured me in Pall-Mall East, and has

mechanical poetry, and historical novels, when our purses have a plethora; but now, my dear fellow, depend upon it, the game is up. We have no scholars now—no literary recluses—no men who ever appear to *think*. 'Scribble, scribble,' as the Duke of Cumberland said to Gibbon, should be the motto of the mighty 'nineteenth century.'"

"Southey, I think, Grey, is an exception."

"By no means. Southey is a political writer—a writer for a particular purpose. All his works, from those in three volumes quarto to those in one duodecimo, are alike political pamphlets. Sharon Turner, in his solitude, alone seems to have his eye upon Prince Posterity; but, as might be expected, the public consequently has not its eye upon Sharon Turner. Twenty years hence they may discover that they had a prophet among them, and knew him not."

"His history is certainly a splendid work, but little known. Lingard's, which in ten years' time will not be known even by name, sells admirably, I believe."

"I was very much amused, Cleveland, with Allen's review of Lingard, in the Edinburgh. His opinion of the 'historian's style'—that it combined, at the same time the excellencies of Gibbon and Hume—was one of the most exquisite specimens of irony, that, I think, I ever met with: it was worthy of former days. I was just going to give up the Edinburgh, when I read that sentence, and I continued in consequence."

"We certainly want a master-spirit to set us right, Grey. Scott, our second Shakespeare, we, of course, cannot expect to step forward to direct the public mind. He is too much engaged in delighting it. Besides, he is not the man for it. He is not a *literateur*. We want Byron."

"Ah! there was the man! And that such a man should be lost to us, at the very moment that he had begun to discover why it had pleased the Omnipotent to have endowed him with such powers!"

"If one thing was more characteristic of Byron's mind than another, it was his strong, shrewd, common sense—his pure, unalloyed sagacity."

"You knew the glorious being, I think, Cleveland?"

"Well; I was slightly acquainted with him, when in England; slightly, however, for I was then very young. But many years afterwards I met him in Italy. It was at Pisa, just before he left for Genoa. I was then very much struck at the alteration in his appearance."

"Indeed!"

"Yes; his face was very much swollen, and he was getting fat. His hair was gray, and his countenance had lost that spiritual expression which it once so eminently possessed. His teeth were decaying; and he said, that if ever he came to England, it would be to consult Wayte about them. I certainly was very much struck at his alteration for the worse. Besides, he was dressed in the most extraordinary manner."

"Slovenly?"

"O! no, no, no,—in the most dandified style that you can conceive; but not that of an English dandy, either. He had on a magnificent foreign foraging cap, which he wore in the room, but his gray curls were quite perceptible; and a frogged *surtout*; and he had a large gold chain round his

neck, and pushed it into his waistcoat pocket. I imagined, of course, that a glass was attached to it; but I afterwards found that it bore nothing but a quantity of trinkets. He had also another gold chain tight round his neck, like a collar."

"How extraordinary! and did you converse much with him?"

"I was not long at Pisa, but we never parted and there was only one subject of conversation—England, England, England. I never met a man in whom the *maladie du pays* was so strong. Byron was certainly at this time restless and discontented. He was tired of his dragoon captain's, and pensioned poetasters, and he dared not come back to England with, what he considered, a tarnished reputation. His only thought was of some desperate exertion to clear himself. It was for this he went to Greece. When I was with him, he was in correspondence with some friends in England, about the purchase of a large tract of land in Colombia. He affected a great admiration of Bolivar."

"Who, by-the-by, is a great man."

"Assuredly."

"Your acquaintance with Byron must have been one of the most gratifying incidents of your life, Cleveland?"

"Certainly; I may say with Friar Martin, in Goetz of Berlichingen, 'The sight of him touched my heart. It is a pleasure to have seen a great man.'"

"Hobhouse was a very faithful friend to him!"

"His conduct has been beautiful—and Byron had a thorough affection for him, in spite of a few squibs, and a few drunken speeches, which demand good-natured friends have always been careful to repeat."

"The loss of Byron can never be retrieved. He was indeed a man—a *real man*; and when I say this, I award him, in my opinion, the most splendid character which human nature need aspire to. At least, I, for my part, have no ambition to be considered either a divinity or an angel; and, truly, when I look round upon the creatures alike effeminate in mind and body, of which *the world* is, in general, composed, I fear that even my ambition is too exalted. Byron's mind was like his own ocean—sublime in its yesty madness—beautiful in its glittering summer brightness—mighty in the lone magnificence of its waste of waters—grand upon the magic of its own nature, yet capable of representing, but as in a glass darkly, the nature of all others. I say, Cleveland, here comes the greatest idiot in town; Craven Bucke. He came to me the other day complaining bitterly of the imperfections of Johnson's Dictionary. He had looked out *Doncaster St. Leger* in it, and couldn't find the word."

"How d'ye do, Bucke? you're just the man I wanted to meet. Make a note of it while I remember. There is an edition of Johnson just published, in which you'll find every single word you want. Now put it down at once. It's published under the title of John Bees' Slang Lexicon. Good-bye! How's your brother?"

"Pray, Cleveland, what do you think of this man's 'new dramatic poem,' Anne Boleyn?"

"I think it's the dullest work on the Catholic question that has yet appeared."

"Is it true that Lockhart is going to have the Quarterly?"

me as a positive fact to-day. I believe I do better. It's absolutely necessary to do something. Lockhart is a great talent. Do you know him?" At least. He certainly is a man of whom I think rather too hot for the

no—a little of the Albemarle antioch cool the fiery wheels of his ot. Come! I see our horses."

is greatly changed since I was a Pray, do the Misses Otranto still so?"

ning as ever." tion to abuse Horace Walpole, but in one of the most delightful wri- xisted. I wonder who is to be the e of the present. Some one per- spect."

, think you?"

probable. I'll tell you who ought emoirs—Lord Dropmore."

Lord Manfred keep his mansion re Misses Otranto?"

, and lives there."

in Germany—a singular man, and

Perhaps he does not understand

in an instant, Cleveland. I just me word to Master Osborne, who I wn here. Well, Osborne, I must ck you up one of these mornings. ttle commission for you from Lady , which you must pay particular

Grey, how does Lady Julia like the

, indeed; but she wants to know ne about the chestnut."

off, sir, in the prettiest style, on ffment, who has just married and in Gower-street. He wanted a bit s he likes it."

does, Jack. There's a particular ou can do me, Osborne, and which ill. Ernest Clay—you know Ernest xcellent fellow is Ernest, you know, d of yours, Osborne:—I wish you'd to Connaught Place, and look at ough of Harry Mounteney. He's le, and we must do what we can for w he's an excellent fellow, and a yours. Thank you, thank you—I uld. Good morning:—remember o you really fitted young Peoffment ut. Well, that was admirable!— ;—good morning."

w whether you care for these things d, but Premium, a famous million- this morning, for I don't know how the new world will be ruined; and , a most excellent fellow, my friend

He was engaged to Premium's *dernière ressource*; and now, of ip with him."

ollege with his brother, Augustus nephew of Lord Mounteney's, is he

ame. Poor fellow! I don't know do for him. I think I shall advise

him to change his name to *Clayville*; and if the world ask him the reason of the euphonious aug- mentation, why, he can swear that it was to distin- guish himself from his brothers. Too many *roués* for the same name will never do. And now spurs to our steeds, for we are going at least three miles out of our way, and I must collect my senses, and arrange my curls before dinner; for I have to flirt with, at least, three fair ones."

CHAPTER II.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE PLOT.

THESE conversations play the very deuse with one's story. I had intended to have commenced this book with something quite terrific—a murder, or a marriage: and I find that all my great ideas have ended in a lounge. After all, it is, perhaps, the most natural termination. In life, surely, man is not always as monstrously busy as he appears to be in novels and romances. We are not always in action—not always making speeches, or making money, or making war, or making love. Occa- sionally we talk,—about the weather, generally— sometimes about ourselves—often about our friends—as often about our enemies; at least, those who have any; which, in my opinion, is the vul- garest of all possessions; I have no enemies. Am I not an amiable fellow? At this moment, I am perfectly happy—am I not a lucky fellow?

And what is your situation, Mr. Felicity? you will ask. Have you just made a brilliant speech in the House? or have you negotiated a great loan for a little nation? or have you touched, for the first time, some fair one's cheek? In short, what splendid juggle have you been successful in? Have you deluded your own country or another? Have you deceived another's heart, or, are you, yourself, a dupe? Not at all, my sweet questioner—I am strolling on a sunny lawn, and flanking butterflies with a tandem whip.

I have not felt so well for these six months. What would I have given to have had my blood dancing as it is now, while I was scribbling the preceding part of this dear book. But there is no- thing like the country! I think I was saying that these lounges in St. James's Park do not always very materially advance the progress of our narra- tive. Not that I would insinuate that the progress of our narrative has flagged at all; not in the least, I am sure we can't be accused of being prosy. There has been no *Balaam* (I do not approve this neologism; but I am too indolent, at present, to think of another word) in these books. I have withstood every temptation; and now, though I scarcely know in what way to make out this vo- lume, here I am, without the least intention of finally proving that our Vivian Grey is the son of the Marquess of Carabas, by a former and secret mar- riage—in Italy, of course,—Count Anselmo, Na- ples—and an old nurse, &c. &c.; or that Mrs. Felix Lorraine is Horace Grey, Esquire, in disguise— or of making that much neglected beauty, Julia Manvers, arrive in the last scene with a chariot with four horses and patent axle-tree—just in time! Alas! dear Julia! we meet again. In the mean time the memory of your bright blue eyes shall not escape me; and when we *do* meet, why you shall talk more and laugh less. But you were young,

when last you listened to my nonsense, one of those innocent young ladies, who, on entering a drawing-room, take a rapid glance at their curls in a pier-glass, and then, flying to the eternal round-table, seek refuge in an admiring examination of the beauties of the Florence Gallery, or the binding of Batty's Views.

This slight allusion to Julia is a digression. I was about to inform you that I have no intention of finishing this book by any thing extraordinary. The truth is, and this is quite confidential, invention is not to be "the feature" of this work. What I have seen, I have written about; and what I shall see, I shall, perhaps, also write about. Some day I may, perchance, write for fame; at present, I write for pleasure. I think, in that case, I'll write an epic, but it shall be in prose. The reign of poetry is over, at least for half a century; and by that time my bones will be bleached. I think I should have made a pretty poet. Indeed, it is with great difficulty that I prevent my paragraphs from hobbling into stanzas.

Stop! I see the finest PURPLE EMPEROR just alighting upon that myrtle. Beautiful insect! thy title is too humble for thy bright estate! for what is the pageantry of princes to the splendour of thy gorgeous robes? I wish I were a purple emperor! I came into the world naked—and you in a garment of glory. I dare not subject myself to the heat of the sun, for fear of a *coup de soleil*; nor to a damp day for fear of the rheumatism; but the free sky is your proper habitation, and air your peculiar element. What care you, bright one, for Dr. Kitchener, or the Almanach des Gourmands? you, whose food is the dew of heaven, and the honeyed juices which you distil from every flower! Shadowed by a leaf of that thick shrub, I could for a moment fancy that your colour was sooty black; and yet now that soft wind has blown the leaf aside, my eye is suddenly dazzled at the resplendent glow of your vivid purple. Now I gaze in admiration at the delightful and amazing variety of your shifting tints playing in the sunbeam; now, as it is lighting up the splendour of your purple mantle, and now lending fresh brilliancy to your rings of burnished gold!

My brilliant purple emperor! I must have you—I must indeed;—but I wish, if possible, to bring you down, rather by the respiration of my flank than the impulse of my thigh. Smack! confound the easterly wind playing up my nostril. I've missed him—and there he flies, mounting higher and higher, till at last he fixes on the topmost branch of yon lofty acacia. What shall I do? I'm not the least in the humour for writing.

There is the luncheon-bell! Luncheon is a meal, if meal it may be called, which I do not patronise. 'Tis very well for schoolboys and young ladies: acceptable to the first, because they are always ready to devour—and to the second, because a glass of sherry and a slice of reindeer's tongue, and a little marmalade, and a little Neufchatel, enable them to toss their pretty little heads at dinner, and "not touch any thing;" be proportionately pitted, and look proportionately interesting. Luncheon is the modern mystery of the Bona Dea. I say nothing, but I once acted Clodius, in this respect. I never wondered afterwards at a woman's want of appetite.

But in the dear delicious country, and in a house where no visiter is staying, and where I am

tempted to commit suicide hourly, I think I must take a very thin crust, or one traveller's biscuit, and a little hock and seltzer; although I'm in that horrid situation, neither possessing appetite, nor wanting refreshments. What shall I do now? Who can write when the sun shines! It's a warm, soft, sunny day, though in March. I'll lie down on the lawn and play with my Italian greyhound. Don't think me a puppy for having one. It was given to me by ——. That's a sufficient excuse, is it not?

"Now, Hyacinth, now, my Hyacinth, now, my own dog; try to leap over me!—frolic away, my beautiful one; I love thee, and have not I cause! What confidence have you violated? What sacred oaths have you outraged? Have you proved a craven in the hour of trial? Have I found you wanting when I called, or false when I fondled? Why do you start so, my pretty dog? Why are your eyes so fixed, your ears so erect? Pretty creature! does anything frighten you? Kiss me, my own Hyacinth, my dear, dear dog! O! you little wretch! you've bit my lip. Get out! I'll not speak to you for a fortnight."

I'll get Spencer's Fairy Queen. I'm just in the humour for reading it; but still it's a horrid bore to get up and go to the library. Come! a desperate exertion! On my legs again—there's nothing like energy. Here's the book. O! how I shall revel in his sweet and bitter fancies!—Confusion! I've brought a volume of Tillotson's Sermons. I hate the fellow! That's the advantage of your country libraries, having all your books bound the same.

Now I don't know what I shall do. I think I'll amuse myself by jumping over that *ha-ha*.—I'm quite confident I can do it—and yet, whenever I'm about trying, my heart sadly misgives me. It's a complete fallacy; it's devilish deep though. There—that easterly wind has balked me again; and here I am, up to my knees in mud; and my pretty violet-coloured slippers spoiled!

First dinner-bell! A hecatomb to the son of Latona,—his rays are getting less powerful, and it's getting a little later. Though nobody is staying here, I'll go and dress myself in the most elaborate manner; it will assist in the destruction of the time. What a dull dinner! I have eaten of every thing—*soupe printanière* (twice)—fillets of turbot à la crème—fowl à la Montmorenci—garnished with *ragoût à l'Allemande*—neck of veal à la St. Menchoult—*marinade* of chickens à la St. Florentin—Muriton of red tongue, with spinach—six quails—two dishes of hail, with plain butter—half a dozen orange jellies, *en mousquins*—cauliflowers with *velouté* sauce, and a *petit gateau à la Marnon*—a *soufflée* with lemon, and a dozen Neufchatel cheeses—a bottle of Marketrunen, a pint of Latour, and a pint of Maraschino. Gone through it all; and yet here I am, breathing as freely as a young eagle. O! for an indigestion, if merely for the sake of variety! Good heavens! I'm afraid I'm getting healthy!

Now for Vivian Grey again! I don't know how it is, but I cannot write to-day; the room's so hot. Open that door—now I shall get better. O! what a wretched pen! I can't get out a sentence. The room's too cold;—shut that *hissid* door. Write I must, and will,—what's the matter? It's this great bowstring of a crust. Off with it! who would ever write in a crust!

CHAPTER III.

BUCKHURST LODGE.

CLEVELAND and Mrs. Felix Lorraine again the gentleman scarcely appeared to be at this meeting was not their first. The old, and, fainted, and remonstrated; and news followed each other in frightful succession. She reproached Mr. Cleveland with past letters. He stared, and deigned not to in artifice, which he considered equally and shallow. Vivian was forced to insist as he deprecated all explanation, his case was of little avail; and, as it was for one party, and uncalled for by the other, was, of course, not encouraged. At last, Mrs. Felix broke through all bounds. Now the old woman insulted Mrs. Cleveland, and showed herself before Mrs. Cleveland's husband insults and her humility were treated as *hauteur*; and at length the Cleverlands burst Lodge.

It was Mrs. Lorraine's conduct in this respect, we should, in candour, confess, at this moment, it was in all others most. Her whole soul seemed concentrated on the approach of the struggle. No too mechanical for her attention, or too for her enthusiastic assiduity. Her attention was not confined merely to Vivian and his, but were lavished with equal generosity on her colleagues. She copied letters for him, and composed letters for Lord Courtenay, and construed letters to Lord Beaconsfield; and, in turn, echoed her praises to her delighted husband who was daily congratulated on the possession of such a fascinating sister-in-law."

"Vivian," said Mrs. Lorraine, to that gentleman, the day previous to his departure from Buckhurst Lodge; "you are going to behind you."

"I hope you will not want me. I am annoyed at not being able to go to you, but Lady Courtown is so pressing; she has promised so often to stay a week that I thought it was better to make out at once, than in six months hence."

"I'm exceedingly sorry, for you are so useful; and the interest you take in me so encouraging, that really I very much regret that we shall not be able to get on without you. The important hour draws nigh."

"Indeed, Vivian—and I assure you that a person awaiting it with intenser interest. I little thought," she added in a distinct voice, "I little thought, when I was in England, that I should ever again be in any thing in this world." Vivian—

—for he had nothing to say. Mrs. Lorraine very briskly resumed Mrs. Lorraine, and you to thank all my letters for me. I trouble the marquess again. Do you strike me you'll make a very good

letter me exceedingly—suppose you give reasons."

"You must leave off some of your whimsies! You must not improvise paragraphs."

"Improvise papers, Mrs. Lorraine! what can you mean?"

"O! nothing. I never mean any thing."

"But you must have had some meaning."

"Some meaning! O, yes! I dare say, I had;—I meant—I meant—do you think it will rain to-day?"

"Every prospect of a hard frost. I never knew before that I was an improvisatore."

"Nor I. Have you heard from papa lately? I suppose he is quite in spirits at your success?"

"My father is a man who seldom gives way to any elation of mind."

"Ah, indeed! a philosopher, I've no doubt like his son."

"I have no claims, I believe, to the title of the philosopher, although I have had the advantage of studying in the school of Mrs. Felix Lorraine."

"Lord! what do you mean? If I thought you meant to be impertinent, I really would pull that pretty little curl, but I excuse you—I think the boy means well."

"O! the boy means nothing—he never means any thing."

"Come, Vivian! we are going to part. Don't let us quarrel the last day. There, my little pet, there's a sprig of myrtle for you!"

"What! not to accept my foolish flower?"

"Nay then, I am unblest indeed!"

And now you want it all! O! you unreasonable young man! If I were not the kindest lady in the land, I should tear this little sprig into a thousand pieces sooner; but come, my pretty pet! you shall have it. There! it looks quite imposing in your buttonhole. How handsome you look to-day!"

"How agreeable you are to-day! I do so love compliments!"

"O! Vivian—will you never give me credit for any thing but a light and callous heart? Will you never be convinced that—that—but why make this humiliating confession! O! no, let me never be misunderstood forever! The time may come, when Vivian Grey will find that Amelia Lorraine was—"

"Was what, lady?"

"You shall choose the word, Vivian."

"Say then my friend."

"'Tis a monosyllable full of meaning, and I will not quarrel with it. And now, adieu! Heaven prosper you! Believe me, that my first thoughts and my last are for you and of you!"

CHAPTER IV.

THE POST.

"THIS is very kind of you, Grey! I was afraid my note might not have caught you. You haven't breakfasted? Really, I wish you'd take up your quarters in Carabas house, for I want you now every moment."

"What is the urgent business of this morning, my lord?"

"O! I've seen Beresford."

"Hah!"

"And every thing is most satisfactory. I did not go into detail; I left that for you: but I cannot

tained sufficient to convince me, that management is now alone required."

"Well, my lord, I trust that will not be wanting."

"No, Vivian—you have opened my eyes to the situation in which fortune has placed me. The experience of every day only proves the truth and the soundness of your views. Fortunate, indeed, was the hour in which we met."

"My lord, I do trust that it was a meeting which neither of us will live to repent."

"Impossible! my dearest friend. I do not hesitate to say that I would not change my present lot for that of any peer of this realm; no, not for that of his majesty's most favoured counsellor. What! with my character and my influence, and my connexions, I to be a tool! I, the Marquess of Carabas! I say nothing of my own powers; but as you often most justly and truly observe, the world has had the opportunity of judging of them; and I think, I may recur without vanity to the days in which my voice had some weight in the royal counsels. And as I have often remarked, I have friends—I have you, Vivian. My career is before you. I know what I should have done, at your age; not to say what I did do—I to be a tool! The very last person that ought to be a tool. But I see my error; you have opened my eyes, and blessed be the hour in which we met. But we must take care how we act Vivian; we must be wary—eh! Vivian—wary—wary. People must know what their situations are—eh! Vivian?"

"Exceedingly useful knowledge, my lord, but I don't exactly understand the particular purport of your lordship's last observation."

"You don't, eh?" asked the peer, and he fixed his eyes as earnestly and expressively as he possibly could upon his young companion. "Well, I thought not. I was positive it was not true," continued the marquess in a murmur.

"What, my lord?"

"O! nothing, nothing; people talk at random—at random. I feel confident you quite agree with me, eh! Vivian?"

"Really, my lord, I fear I'm unusually dull this morning."

"Dull! no, no, you quite agree with me, I feel confident you do. People must be taught what their situations are—that's what I was saying, Vivian. My Lord Courtown," added the marquess in a whisper, "is not to have every thing his own way—eh! Vivian?"

"O, O!" thought Vivian, "this then is the result of that admirable creature, Mrs. Felix Lorraine, staying a week with her dear friend, Lady Courtown."—"My lord, it would be singular if, in the Carabas party, the Carabas interest was not the predominant one."

"I knew you thought so. I couldn't believe for a minute that you could think otherwise: but some people take such strange ideas into their heads—I can't account for them. I felt confident what would be your opinion. My Lord Courtown is not to carry every thing before him, in the spirit that I have lately observed, or rather in the spirit which I understand, from very good authority, is exhibited. Eh! Vivian—that's your opinion, isn't it?"

"O! my dear marquess, we must think alike on this, as on all points."

"I knew it. I felt confident as to your sentiments upon this subject. I cannot conceive why

some people take such strange ideas into their heads. I knew that you couldn't disagree with me upon this point. No, no, no; my Lord Courtown must feel which is the predominant interest, as you so well express it. How choice your expressions always are! I don't know how it is, but you always hit upon the right expression, Vivian—*The predominant interest*—the pre-do-mi-nant—in-te-rest. To be sure. What! with my high character and connexions, with my stake in society, was it to be expected that I, the Marquess of Carabas, was going to make any move which compromised the predominancy of my interest! No, no, no, my Lord Courtown—the predominant interest must be kept predominant,—eh! Vivian!"

"To be sure, to be sure, my lord; explicitness and decision will soon arrange any *desagrément*."

"I have been talking to the marchioness, Vivian, upon the expediency of her opening the season early. I think a course of parliamentary dinner would produce a good effect. It gives a tone to a political party."

"Certainly; the science of political gastronomy has never been sufficiently studied."

"Egad! Vivian, I'm in such spirits this morning. This business of Beresford so delights me; and finding you agree with me about Lord Courtown, I was confident as to your sentiments on that point. But some people take such strange ideas in their heads! To be sure, to be sure, the predominant interest, mine—that is to say, ours, Vivian, is the predominant interest. I've no idea of the predominant interest not being predominant; that would be singular! I knew you'd agree with me—we always agree. 'Twas a lucky hour when we met. Two minds so exactly alike! I was just your very self when I was young; and as for you—my career is before you."

Here entered Mr. Sadler with the letters.

"One from Courtown. I wonder if he has seen Mounteney. Mounteney is a very good-natured fellow, and I think might be managed. Ah! I wish you could get hold of him, Vivian; you'd soon bring him round. What it is to have brains, Vivian!" and here the marquess shook his head very pompously, and at the same time tapped very significantly on his left temple. "Hah! what's all this! Here, read it, man—I've no head to-day."

Vivian took the letter, and his quick eye dashed through its contents in a second. It was from Lord Courtown, and dated far in the country. It talked of private communications, and premature conduct, and the suspicions, not to say dishonest behaviour of Mr. Vivian Grey: it trusted that such conduct was not sanctioned by his lordship, but "nevertheless obliged to act with decision—regretted the necessity," &c. &c. &c. &c. In short, Lord Courtown had deserted, and recalled his pledges as to the official appointment promised to Mr. Cleveland, "because that promise was made while he was the victim of delusions created by the representations of Mr. Grey."

"What can all this mean, my lord?"

The marquess swore a fearful oath, and drew another letter.

"This is from Lord Beaconsfield, my lord," said Vivian, with a face pallid as death, "and apparently the composition of the same writer; at least it is the same tale, the same *refacimento* of his, and treachery, and cowardice, doled out with dip-

atic *politesse*. But I will off to —shire instantly. It is not yet too late to save every thing. This is Wednesday; on Thursday afternoon I shall be at Norwood Park. Thank God! I came in this morning."

The face of the marquess, who was treacherous; the wind, seemed already to indicate, "Adieu! Mr. Vivian Grey!" but that countenance exhibited some very different passions, when it glanced over the contents of the next epistle. There was a tremendous oath—and a dead silence. His lordship's florid countenance turned as pale as that of his companion. The perspiration stole down in heavy drops. He gasped for breath!

"Good God! my lord, what is the matter?"

"The matter!" howled the marquess, "the matter! That I have been a vain, weak, miserable fool!" and then there was another oath, and he hung the letter to the other side of the table.

It was the official congé of the most noble lordship, Marquess of Carabas. His majesty had no longer any occasion for his services. His successor was Courtown!

I will not affect to give any description of the conduct of the Marquess of Carabas at this moment. He raved! he stamped! he blasphemed! but the whole of his abuse was levelled against his former "monstrous clever" young friend; of whose character he had so often boasted that his own was the prototype, but who was now an adventurer—a swindler—a scoundrel—a liar—a base, deluding, flattering, fawning villain, &c. &c. &c. &c.

"My lord!"—said Vivian.

"I'll not hear you—out on your fair words! They have duped me enough already. That I, with my high character and connexions! that I, the Marquess of Carabas, should have been the victim of the arts of a young scoundrel!"

Vivian's fist was once clenched—but it was only for a moment. The marquess leaned back in his chair, with his eyes shut. In the agony of the moment, a projecting tooth of his upper jaw had forced itself through his upper lip, and from the wound the blood was flowing freely over his dead white countenance. Vivian left the room.

CHAPTER V.

THE RACK.

He stopped one moment on the landing place, where he was about to leave the house forever.

"'Tis all over! and so, Vivian Grey your game is up! and to die, too, like a dog!—a woman's ruse! Were I a despot, I should perhaps satiate my vengeance upon this female fiend, with the assistance of the rack—but that cannot be; and, after all, it would be but a poor revenge in one who has worshipped the EMPIRE OF THE INTELLECT, to indicate the agony I am now enduring upon the same body of a woman. No! 'tis not all over. There is yet an intellectual rack few dream of, far, far more terrific than the most exquisite contrivances of Parysatis. Madeleine," said he to a female attendant that passed, "is your mistress at home?"

"She is, sir."

"Tis well," said Vivian, and he sprang up stairs.

"Health to the lady of our Jove!" said Vivian Grey, as he entered the elegant boudoir of Mrs. Felix Lorraine. "In spite of the easterly wind which has spoiled my beauty for the season, I could not refrain from inquiring after your prosperity, before I went to the marquess. Have you heard the news?"

"News! no; what news?"

"'Tis a sad tale," said Vivian, with a melancholy voice.

"O! then, pray don't tell it me. I'm in no humour for sorrow to-day. Come! a bon mot, or a calembourg, or *exit*, Mr. Vivian Grey."

"Well, then, good morning! I'm off for a black crape, or a Barcelona kerchief.—Mrs. Cleveland is —dead."

"Dead!" exclaimed Mrs. Lorraine.

"Ay; cold dead. She died last night—suddenly. Isn't it horrible?"

"Shocking!" exclaimed Mrs. Lorraine, with a mournful voice, and an eye dancing with joy. "Why! Mr. Grey, I do declare you're weeping."

"It is not for the departed!"

"Nay, Vivian! for Heaven's sake, what's the matter?"

"My dear Mrs. Lorraine!"—But here the speaker's voice was choked with grief, and he could not proceed.

"Pray, compose yourself."

"Mrs. Felix Lorraine, can I speak with you half an hour, undisturbed?"

"O! certainly, by all means. I'll ring for Madeleine. Madeleine! mind, I'm not at home to any one. Well! what's the matter?"

"O! madam, I must pray your patience. I wish you to shrieve a penitent."

"Good God! Mr. Grey, for Heaven's sake be explicit."

"For Heaven's sake—for your sake—for my soul's sake, I would be explicit; but explicitness is not the language of such as I am. Can you listen to a tale of horror? can you promise me to contain yourself?"

"I will promise any thing. Pray, pray, proceed."

But, in spite of her earnest solicitations, her companion was mute. At length he arose from his chair, and leaning on the chimney-piece buried his face in his hands, and wept most bitterly.

"Vivian," said Mrs. Lorraine, "have you seen the marquess yet?"

"Not yet," he sobbed; "I am going to him—but I'm in no humour for business this morning."

"O, compose yourself, I beseech you. I will hear every thing. You shall not complain of an inattentive, or an irritable auditor. Now, my dear Vivian, sit down and tell me all." She led him to a chair, and then after stifling his sobs, with a broken voice he proceeded.

"You will recollect, madam, that accident made me acquainted with certain circumstances connected with yourself and Mr. Cleveland. Alas! actuated by the vilest sentiments, I conceived a violent hatred against that gentleman—a hatred only to be equalled by my passion for you; but, I find difficulty in dwelling upon the details of this sad story of jealousy and despair."

"O! speak, speak! compensate for all you have done, by your present frankness;—be brief—be brief."

"I will be brief," shouted Vivian, with terrible

earnestness; "I will be *brief*. Know then, madam, that in order to prevent the intercourse between you and Mr. Cleveland from proceeding, I obtained his friendship, and became the confidant of his heart's sweetest secret. Thus situated, I suppressed the letters with which I was entrusted from him to you, and poisoning his mind, I accounted for your silence, by your being employed in *other* correspondence; nay, I did more; with the malice of a fiend, I boasted of — nay, do not stop me; I have more to tell."

Mrs. Felix Lorraine, with compressed lips, and looks of horrible earnestness, gazed in silence.

"The result of all this you know—but the most terrible part is to come; and, by a strange fascination, I fly to confess my crimes at your feet, even while the last minutes have witnessed my most heinous one. O! madam, I have stood over the bier of the departed; I have mingled my tears with those of the sorrowing widower—his young and tender child was on my knee; and as I kissed his innocent lips, methought it was but my duty to the departed, to save the father from his mother's rival —" He stopped.

"Yes—yes—yes," said Mrs. Felix Lorraine, in a low whisper.

"It was then, even then, in the hour of his desolation that I mentioned your name; that it might the more *disgust* him; and while he wept over his virtuous and sainted wife, I dwelt on the vices of his rejected *mistress*."

Mrs. Lorraine clasped her hands, and moved restlessly on her seat.

"Nay! do not stop me;—let me tell *all*. 'Cleveland,' said I, 'if ever you become the husband of Mrs. Felix Lorraine, remember my last words:—It will be well for you, if your frame be like that of Mithridates of Pontus, and proof against — *poison*.'"

"And did you say this?" shrieked the woman.

"Even these were my words."

"Then may all evil blast you!" She threw herself on the sofa; her voice was choked with the convulsions of her passion, and she writhed in the most fearful agony.

Vivian Grey, lounging in an arm-chair, in the easiest of postures, and with a face brilliant with smiles, watched his victim with the eye of a *Mephistopheles*.

She slowly recovered, and with a broken voice poured forth her sacred absolution to the relieved penitent.

"You wonder I do not stab you—hah! hah! hah! there is no need for *that*;—the good powers be praised, that you refused the draught I once proffered. Know, wretch, that your race is run. Within five minutes you will be a beggar and an outcast. Your golden dreams are over—your cunning plans are circumvented—your ambitious hopes are crushed forever—you are blighted in the very spring of your life. O! may you never die! May you wander forever, the butt of the world's malice! and may the slow moving finger of scorn point where'er you go to the ruined charlatan!"

"Ha, ha! is it so, my lady? O! think you, that Vivian Grey would fall by a woman's wile? O! think you that Vivian Grey could be crushed by such a worthless thing as *you*? Know, then, that your political intrigues have been as little concealed from *me*, as your personal ones;—I have *been acquainted with all*. The marquess has, him-

self, seen the minister, and is more firmly established in his pride of place than ever. I have, myself, seen our colleagues, whom you tampered with, and their hearts are still true, and their purpose still fixed. All, all prospers; and ere five days are passed, 'the *charlatan*' will be a *senator*."

The shifting expressions of Mrs. Lorraine's countenance, while Vivian was speaking, would have baffled the most cunning painter. Her complexion was capricious as the chameleon's, and her countenance was so convulsed, that her features seemed of all shapes and sizes. One large vein protruded nearly a quarter of an inch from her forehead; and the dank light which gleamed in her tearful eye, was like an unwholesome meteor quivering in a marsh. When he ended, she sprang from the sofa, and looking up, and extending her arms with unmeaning wildness, she gave one loud shriek, and dropped like a bird shot on the wing —she had burst a blood-vessel.

Vivian raised her on the sofa and paid her every possible attention. There is always a vile apothecary lurking about the mansions of the noble, and so a Mr. Andrews soon appeared, and to this worthy and the attendant Madeleine, Vivian delivered his patient.

Had Vivian Grey left the boudoir a pledged bridegroom, his countenance could not have been more triumphant; but he was labouring under the most unnatural excitement: for it is singular that when, as he left the house, the porter told him that Mr. Cleveland was with his lord, Vivian had no idea at the moment what individual bore that name. The fresh air of the street revived him, and somewhat cooled the bubbling of his blood. It was then that the man's information struck upon his senses.

"So, poor Cleveland!" thought Vivian, "then he knows all!" His own misery he had not yet thought of; but when Cleveland occurred to him, with his ambition once more balked—his high hopes once more blasted—and his honourable soul once more deceived,—when he thought of his fair wife, and his infant children, and his ruined prospects, a sickness came over his heart, he grew dizzy, and fell.

"And the gentleman's ill, I think," said an honest Irishman; and, in the fulness of his charity, he placed Vivian on a door step.

"So it seems," said a genteel passenger in black; and he snatched, with great *sangfroid*, Vivian's gold watch.

"Stop thief!" hallooed the Hibernian. Paddy was tripped up. There was a row; in the midst of which Vivian Grey crawled to a hotel.

CHAPTER VI.

THE CLUB.

IN half an hour Vivian was at Mr. Cleveland's door.

"My master is at the Marquess of Carab's, sir; he will not return, but is going immediately to Richmond, where Mrs. Cleveland is staying."

Vivian immediately wrote to Mr. Cleveland. "If your master has left the marquess's, let this be forwarded to him at Richmond immediately."

"CLEVELAND!—You know all. It would be mockery were I to say, that at this moment I am

thinking of myself. I am a ruined man in body and in mind. But my own misery is nothing; I can die—I can go mad—and who will be harmed? But you! I had wished that we could never meet again; but my hand refuses to do the thoughts with which my heart is full, and am under the sad necessity of requesting you to see me once more. We have been betrayed—and a woman: but there has been revenge! O! at revenge!

VIVIAN GREY."

When Vivian left Mr. Cleveland's, he actually did not know what to do with himself. Home, at present, he could not face, and so he continued to wander about quite unconscious of locality. He pressed in his progress many of his acquaintances, so, from his distracted air and rapid pace, imagined that he was intent on some important business. At length he found himself in one of the most sequestered parts of Kensington gardens. It was a cold, frosty day, and as Vivian flung himself on one of the summer seats, the snow drifted from off the frozen board; but Vivian's brow was burning hot as if he had been an inhabitant of Sirius. Throwing his arms on a small garden table, he buried his face in his hands, and wept—men can but once weep in this world! O! thou sublime and most subtle philosopher, so, in thy lamp-lit cell, art speculating upon the passions which thou hast never felt! O! thou luscious and most admirable poet, who, with cunning words, art painting with a smile a tale of woe! I know what is grief, and solve me the mystery of sorrow.

Not for himself—for after the first pang, he would have whistled off his high hopes with the spirit of a Ripperda—not even for Cleveland—at this moment, it must be confessed, his thoughts were not for his friend—did Vivian's soul struggle as if it were about to leave its shy chamber. I said he wept; as men can weep but once in this world, and yet it would have been impossible for him to have defined what, at that fearful moment, was the cause of his heart's sorrow. Incidents of childhood of the most trivial nature, and until this moment forgotten, flashed across his memory; he gazed on the smile of his mother—he listened to the sweet tones of his father's voice—and his hand clenched with still more agonized grasp his rude resting-place; and the stinging tears dashed down his cheek in still more violent torrents. He had no distinct remembrance of what had so lately happened; but characters stood before him as in a theatre, in a dream—dim and shadowy, yet full of mysterious and indefinite interest; and then there came a horrible idea across his mind, that his glittering youth was gone and wasted; and then there was a dark whisper of treachery, and dissimulation, and dishonour; and then he sobbed as if his very heart was cracking. All his boasted philosophy vanished—his artificial feelings fled him. Insulted nature reasserted her long-spurned authority, and the once proud Vivian Grey felt too humble even to curse himself. Gradually his sobs became less convulsed, and his brow more cool; and calm from very exhaustion, he sat up towards an hour motionless.

At this moment there issued with their attendant, from an adjoining shrubbery, two beautiful children. They were so exceedingly lovely, that a passenger would have stopped to gaze upon

them. The eldest, who yet was very young, was leading his sister hand-in-hand, with slow and graceful steps, mimicking the courtesy of men. But when his eye caught Vivian's, the boy uttered a loud cry of exultation, and rushed with the eagerness of infantile affection to his gentle and favourite playmate. They were the young Cleverlands. With what miraculous quickness will man shake off the outward semblance of grief when his sorrow is a secret! The mighty merchant who knows that in four-and-twenty hours the world must be astounded by his insolvency, will walk in the front of his confident creditor, as if he was the lord of a thousand argosies—the meditating suicide will smile on the arm of a companion, as if to breathe in this sunny world were the most ravishing and rapturous bliss. We cling to our stations in our fellow-creatures' minds and memories; we know, too well, the frail tenure on which we are in this world great and considerate personages. Experience makes us shrink from the specious sneer of sympathy: and when we are ourselves falling, bitter memory whispers, that we have ourselves been neglectful.

And so it was, that even unto these infants Vivian Grey dared not appear other than a gay and easy-hearted man; and in a moment he was dancing them on his knee, and playing with their curls, and joining in their pretty prattle, and pressing their small and fragrant lips.

It was night when he paced down.—He passed his club; that club, to become a member of which had once been the object of his high ambition, and to gain which privilege had cost such hours of canvassing; such interference of noble friends; and the incurring of favours from five thousand people, "which never could be forgotten."

I know not what desperate feeling actuated him, but he entered the club-house. He walked into the great saloon, and met some fifty most "particular friends," all of whom asked him "how the marquess did," or "have you seen Cleveland?" and a thousand other as comfortable queries. At length, to avoid these disagreeable rencontres, and, indeed, to rest himself, he went to a smaller and more private room. As he opened the door, his eyes lighted upon Cleveland.

He was standing with his back to the fire. There were only two other persons in the room: one was a friend of Cleveland's, and the other an acquaintance of Vivian's. The latter was writing at the table.

When Vivian saw Cleveland, he would have retired, but he was bid to "come in," in a voice of thunder.

As he entered, he instantly perceived that Cleveland was under the influence of wine. When in this situation, unlike other men, Mr. Cleveland's conduct was not distinguished by any of the little improprieties of behaviour by which a man is always known by his friends "to be very drunk." He neither reeled nor hiccupped, nor grew maudlin. The effect of drinking upon him was only to increase the intensity of the sensation by which his mind was, at the moment, influenced. He did not even lose the consciousness of identity of persons. At this moment it was clear to Vivian that Cleveland was under the influence of the extremest passion: his eyes rolled wildly, and seemed fixed only upon vacancy. As Vivian was no friend to scorns before strangers, he bowed to

the two gentlemen, and saluted Cleveland with his wonted cordiality; but his proffered hand was rudely repelled.

"Away!" exclaimed Cleveland, in a furious tone, "I have no friendship for traitors!"

The two gentlemen stared, and the pen of the writer stopped.

"Cleveland!" said Vivian, in an earnest whisper, as he came up close to him;—"for God's sake contain yourself. I have written you a letter which explains all—but—"

"Out! out upon you! Out upon your honeyed words and your soft phrases! I've been their dupe too long!" and he struck Vivian with tremendous force.

"Sir John Poynings!" said Vivian, with a quivering lip, turning to the man writing at the table—"we were school-fellows; circumstances have prevented us from meeting often in after-life, but I now ask you with the frankness of an old acquaintance, to do me the sad service of accompanying me in this quarrel—a quarrel which I call Heaven to witness, is not of my seeking."

The baronet, who was in the guards, and, although a great dandy, quite a man of business in these matters, immediately rose from his seat, and led Vivian to a corner of the room. After some whispering, he turned round to Mr. Cleveland, and bowed to him with a very significant look. It was evident that Cleveland comprehended his meaning, for though he was silent, he immediately pointed to the other gentleman—his friend Mr. Castleton.

"Mr. Castleton," said Sir John, giving his card, "Mr. Grey will accompany me to my rooms in Pall Mall; it is now ten o'clock: we shall wait two hours, in which time I hope to hear from you. I leave time, and place, and terms to yourself. I only wish to be understood that it is the particular desire of my principal that the meeting should be as speedy as possible."

About eleven o'clock the communication from Mr. Castleton arrived. It was quite evident that Cleveland was sobered, for, in one instance, Vivian observed that the style was corrected by his own hand. The hour was eight the next morning, at — Common, about six miles from town.

Poynings wrote to a professional friend to be on the ground at half-past seven, and then he and Vivian retired.

Did you ever fight a duel? No! Nor send a challenge either! Well! you're fresh indeed! 'Tis an awkward business, after all—even for the boldest. After an immense deal of negotiation, and giving the party every opportunity of coming to an *honourable* understanding, the fatal letter is at length signed, sealed, and sent. You pass your morning at your second's apartments, pacing his drawing-room, with a quivering lip and uncertain step. At length he enters with an answer, and while he reads, you endeavour to look easy, with a countenance merry with the most melancholy smiles. You have no appetite at dinner, but you are too *brave* not to appear at table; and you are called out after the second glass by the arrival of your solicitor who comes to alter your will. You pass a restless night, and rise in the morning as bilious as a Bengal general. Urged by impending fate, you make a desperate effort to accommodate matters, but in the contest between your pride and your terror, you at the same time prove that you're *a coward*, and fail in the negotiation. You both

fire—and miss; and then the seconds interfere, and then you shake hands, every thing being arranged in the most *honourable* manner, and to the mutual satisfaction of both parties. The next day you are seen pacing Bond street with an erect front, and a flashing eye—with an air at once dandiyish and heroic—a mixture, at the same time, of Brummel and the Duke of Wellington.

It was a fine February morning. Sir John drove Vivian to the ground in his cabriolet.

"Nothing like a cab, Grey, for the business you're going on. I only keep it for *meetings*. You glide along the six miles in such style, that it actually makes you quite courageous. I remember once going down on a similar purpose, in a post and pair; and, 'pon my soul, when I came to the ground, my hand shook so that I could scarcely draw. But I was green then. Now when I go in my cab, with Philidor with his sixteen-mile-an-hour paces, egad! I wing my man in a trice; and take all the parties home to Pall Mall, to celebrate the event with a grilled bone, Havannahs, and Regent's punch. Ah! there! that's Cleveland that we have just passed, going to the ground in a chariot: he's a dead man, or my name's not Poynings—"

"Come, Sir John; no fear of Cleveland's dying," said Vivian with a smile.

"What, you mean to fire in the air, and all that sort of thing?—sentimental, but slip-slop!"

The ground is measured—all is arranged. Cleveland, a splendid shot, fired first. His pistol grazed Vivian's elbow. Vivian fired in the air. The seconds interfered. Cleveland was implacable—and "in the most irregular manner," as Sir John declared, insisted upon another shot. To the astonishment of all, he fired quite wild. Vivian shot at random; and his bullet pierced Cleveland's heart. Cleveland sprang nearly two yards from the ground, and then fell upon his back. In a moment Vivian was at the side of his fallen antagonist; but the dying man "made no sign," he stared wildly, and then closed his eyes forever.

CHAPTER VII.

TRAVEL.

WHEN Vivian Grey remembered his existence, he found himself in bed. The curtains of his couch were closed; but, as he stared around him, they were softly withdrawn, and a face that recalled every thing to his recollection, gazed upon him with a look of affectionate anxiety.

"My father!" exclaimed Vivian—but the finger pressed on the parental lip warned him to silence. His father knelt by his side, and softly kissed his forehead, and then the curtains were again closed.

Six weeks, unconsciously to Vivian, had elapsed since the fatal day, and he was now recovering from the effects of a fever, from which his medical attendants had supposed he never could have escaped. And what had been the past? It did, indeed, seem like a hot and feverish dream. Here was he, once more in his own quiet room, watched over by his beloved parents; and had there then ever existed such beings as the marquess, and Mr. Lorraine, and Cleveland, or were they only the actors in a vision? "It must be so," thought Vivian; and he jumped up in his bed, and stared

wildly around him. "And yet it was a horrid dream! Murder! horrible murder!—and so real! so palpable! I muse upon their voices, as upon familiar sounds, and I recall all the events, not as the shadowy incidents of sleep—that mysterious existence in which the experience of a century seems caught in the breathing of a second—but as the natural and material consequences of time and stirring life. O! no! it is too true!" shrieked the wretched sufferer, as his eye glanced upon a flask which was on the table, and which had been given to him by the marquess; "it is true! it is true! murder! murder!" he foamed at the mouth and sunk exhausted on his pillow.

But the human mind can master many sorrows, and after a desperate relapse, and another miraculous rally, Vivian Grey rose from his bed.

"My father! I fear that I shall live!"

"Hope, rather, my beloved."

"O! why should I hope?" and the sufferer's head sank upon his breast.

"Do not give way, my son; all will yet be well, and we shall all yet be happy," said the father, with streaming eyes.

"Happy! O, not in this world, my father!"

"Vivian, my dearest, your mother visited you this morning, but you were asleep. She was quite happy to find you slumbering so calmly."

"And yet my dreams were not the dreams of joy. O! my mother, you were wont to smile upon me—alas! you smiled upon your sorrow."

"Vivian, my beloved! you must indeed restrain your feelings. At your age, life cannot be the lost game you think it. A little repose, and I shall yet see my boy the honour to society which he deserves to be."

"Alas! my father, you know not what I feel! The springiness of my mind has gone. O! man, what vain fool thou art! Nature has been too bountiful to thee. She has given thee the best of friends, and you value not the gift of exceeding price, until your griefs are past even friendship's cure. O! my father! why did I leave you!" and he seized Mr. Grey's hand with a convulsive grasp.

Time flew on even in this house of sorrow. "My boy," said Mr. Grey to his son one day, "your mother and I have been consulting together about you; and we think, now that you have somewhat recovered your strength, it may be well for you to leave England for a short time. The novelty of travel will relieve your mind, without too much exciting it; and if you can manage by the autumn, to settle down anywhere within a thousand miles of England, why we will come and join you, and you know that will be very pleasant. What say you, my boy, to this little plan?"

In a few weeks after this proposition had been made, Vivian Grey was in Germany. He wandered for some months in that beautiful land of rivers, among which flows the Rhine, matchless in its loveliness; and at length, the pilgrim shook the dust off his feet at Heidelberg, in which city Vivian proposed taking up his residence. It is, in truth, a place of surpassing loveliness; where all the romantic wildness of German scenery is blended with the soft beauty of the Italian. An immense plain, which, in its extent and luxuriance, reminds you of the most fertile tracts of Tuscany, is bordered on one side by the Bergstrasse mountains, and on the other by the range of the Vosges. Situated

on the river Neckar, in a ravine of the Bergstrasse, amid mountains covered with vines, is the city of Heidelberg: its ruined castle backing the city, and still frowning from one of the most commanding heights. In the middle of the broad plain may be distinguished the shining spires of Mannheim, Worms, and Frankenthal; and pouring its rich streams through its luxuriant land, the beautiful and abounding Rhine receives the tribute of the Neckar. The range of the Vosges forms the extreme distance.

To the little world, of the little city, of which he was now an inhabitant, Vivian Grey did not appear a broken-hearted man. He lived neither as a recluse, nor a misanthrope. He became extremely addicted to field sports, especially to hunting the wild boar; for he feared nothing so much as thought, and dreaded nothing so much as the solitude of his own chamber. He was an early riser, to escape from hideous dreams; and, at break of dawn, he wandered among the wild passes of the Bergstrasse; or, climbing a lofty ridge, was a watcher for the rising sun; and in the evening he sailed upon the star-lit Neckar.

I fear me much, that Vivian Grey is a lost man; but I am sure that every sweet and gentle spirit, who has read this sad story of his fortunes, will breathe a holy prayer this night for his restoration to society and to himself.

BOOK THE FIFTH.

CHAPTER I.

Thou rapid Aar! thy waves are swollen by the snows of a thousand hills—but for whom are thy leaping waters fed?—Is it for the Rhine?

Calmly, O placid Neckar! does thy blue stream glide through thy vine-clad vales—but calmer seems thy course when it touches the rushing Rhine!

How fragrant are the banks which are cooled by thy dark-green waters, thou tranquil Maine!—but is not the perfume sweeter of the gardens of the Rhine!

Thou impetuous Nah! I lingered by thine islands of nightingales, and I asked thy rushing waters why they disturbed the music of thy groves?—They told me, they were hastening to the Rhine!

Red Moselle! fierce is the swell of thy spreading course—but why do thy broad waters blush when they meet the Rhine?

Thou delicate Meuse! how clear is the current of thy limpid wave—as the wife yields to the husband, do thy pure waters yield to the Rhine!

And thou! triumphant and imperial river, flushed with the tribute of these vassal streams; thou art thyself a tributary, and hastenest even in the pride of conquest to confess thine own vassalage! But no superior stream exults in the homage of thy servile waters: the ocean, the eternal ocean, alone comes forward to receive thy kiss!—not as a conqueror, but as a parent, he welcomes with proud joy his gifted child, the offspring of his honour; thy duty—his delight; thy tribute—thine own glory!

Once more upon thy banks, most beautiful

RHINE! In the spring-time of my youth I gazed on thee, and deemed thee matchless. Thy vine-enslaved mountains—thy spreading waters—thy traditional crags—thy shining cities—the sparkling villages of thy winding shores—thy antique convents—thy gray and silent castles—the purple glories of thy radiant grape—the vivid tints of thy teeming flowers—the fragrance of thy sky—the melody of thy birds, whose carols tell the pleasures of their sunny woods, are they less lovely now, less beautiful, less sweet?

Once more upon thy banks, most beautiful Rhine! Since I first gazed on thee, other climes have revealed to me their wonders and their glory—other climes, which Fame, perhaps, loves more; which many deem more beautiful—but not for a moment have I forgotten thy varied banks, and my memory still clings to thee, thou river of my youth!

The keen emotions of our youth are often the occasion of our estimating too ardently; but the first impression of beauty, though often overcharged, is seldom supplanted: and as the first great author which he reads is revered by the boy as most immortal, and the first beautiful woman that he meets is sanctified by him as the most adorable; so the impressions created upon us by those scenes of nature which first realize the romance of our reveries, never escape from our minds, and are ever consecrated in our memories;—and thus some great spirits, after having played their part on the theatre of the world, have retired from the blaze of courts and cities, to the sweet seclusion of some spot, which they have accidentally met with in the earlier years of their career.

But we are to speak of one who had retired from the world before his time; of one, whose early vices, and early follies, have been already obtruded, for no unworthy reason, on the notice of the public, in as hot and hurried a sketch as ever yet was penned; but, like its subject—for what is youth but a sketch—a brief hour of principles unsettled, passions unrestrained, powers undeveloped, and purposes unexecuted!

I am loath to speak even one moment of the author, instead of the hero; but with respect to those who have with such singular industry associated the character of the author of Vivian Grey with that of its hero, I must observe, that as this is an inconvenience which I share in company with more celebrated writers, so also is it one which will never prevent me from describing any character which my mind may conceive.

To those who, alike unacquainted with my person, my life, my habits, have, with that audacious accuracy for which ignorance is celebrated, not only boldly avowed that the original of my hero may be discovered in myself, but that the character, at the same time, forms also a flattering portrait of a more frail original, I shall say nothing. Most of these chattering are included in that vast catalogue of frivolous beings who carry on in society an espionage on a small scale, not precisely through malice, but from an invincible ambition of having something to say, when they have nothing to think about. A few of those persons, I am informed, cannot even plead a brainless skull as an excuse for their indecent conduct; but dreading that in time the lash might be applied to their own *guilty littleness*, they have sought in the propagation of falsehood on their part, a boasted means

for the prevention of further publication on mine. Unlucky rogues! how effectual have been your exertions! Let me not by one irritable expression console these clumsy midwives of calumny for the abortion of their slander; but pass over their offences with that merciful silence, to which even insolent imbecility is ever entitled.

Of the personal and political matter contained in the former books of this work, I can declare, that though written in a hasty, it was not written in a reckless spirit; and that there is nothing contained in those volumes of which I am morally ashamed. As to the various satires in verse, and political and dramatic articles of unsuccessful newspapers, which have been palmed, with such lavish liberality, upon myself, or upon another individual as the supposed author of this work—inasmuch as I never wrote one single line of them, neither of the articles nor of the satires, it is unnecessary for me to apologize for their contents. They have been made the ostensible, the avowed pretext for a series of attacks, which I now, for once, notice, only to recommend them to the attentive study of those ingenious gentlemen who wish to be libellers with impunity; and who are desirous of vindicating imaginary wrongs, or maintaining a miserable existence by the publication of periodical rhapsodies, whose foul scurrility, over-wrought malice, ludicrous passion, evident mendacity, and frantic feebleness, alike exempt them from the castigation of literary notice or the severer penalties of an outraged law.

Of the literary vices of Vivian Grey, no one is perhaps more sensible than their author. I conceive the character of a youth of great talents, whose mind had been corrupted, as the minds of many of our youth have been, by the artificial age in which he lived. The age was not less corrupted than the being it had generated. In his whole career he was to be pitied; but for his whole career he was not to be less punished. When I sketched the feelings of his early boyhood, as the novelist, I had already foreseen the results to which those feelings were to lead; and had in store for the fictitious character the punishment which he endured. I am blamed for the affection, the flippancy, the arrogance, the wicked wit of this fictitious character. Yet was Vivian Grey to talk like Simon Pure, and act like Sir Charles Grandison?

But to our tale.—Upwards of a year had now elapsed since Vivian Grey left England. The mode of life which he pursued at Heidelberg for many months, has already been mentioned. He felt himself a broken-hearted man, and looked for death, whose delay was no blessing; but the feelings of youth which had misled him in his burning hours of joy, equally deceived him in his days of sorrow, he lived; and in the course of time, found each day that life was less burdensome. The truth is, that if it be the lot of man to suffer, it is also his fortune to forget. Oblivion and sorrow share our being in much the same manner as darkness and light divide the course of time. It is not in human nature, to endure extremities; and sorrows soon destroy either us or themselves. Perhaps the fate of Niobe is no fable, but a type of the callousness of our nature. There is a time in human suffering when succeeding sorrows are but like snow falling on an iceberg. It is true that it is horrible to think that our peace of mind

could arise, not from a retrospection of the past, not from a forgetfulness of it; but though this act of mind is produced at the best by a mental laudanum, it is not valueless; and oblivion, after all, is a just judge. As we retain but a faint remembrance of our felicity, it is but fair that the smartest stroke of sorrow should, if bitter, at least be brief. But in feeling that he might yet again mingle in the world, Vivian Grey also felt that he must meet mankind with different feelings, and view their pursuits with a different interest. He woke from his secret sorrow in as changed a state of being as the water-nymph from her first embrace; and he woke with a new possession, not only as miraculous as Undine's soul, but gained at a great price, and leading to as bitter results. The nymph woke to new pleasures, and to new sorrows; and innocent as an infant, she deemed mankind a god, and the world a paradise. Vivian Grey discovered that this deity was but an idol of sense, and this garden of Eden but a savage waste; and if the river-nymph had gained a soul, he had gained EXPERIENCE.

EXPERIENCE—word so lightly used, so little understood! Experience,—mysterious spirit! whose suit is felt by all, whose nature is described by none. The father warns the son of your approach, and sometimes looks to you as his offspring's cure, and his own consolation. We hear of you in the nursery—we hear of you in the world—we hear of you in books; but who has recognised you? who was your subject, and who has discovered the object of so much fame until he has kissed your shrine? To gain you is the work of all, and the shame of all; you are at the same time necessary to our happiness, and destructive of our felicity; you are the saviour of all things, and the destroyer of all things; our best friend, and our bitterest enemy; for you teach us truth, and that truth is despair. Ye youth of England, would that ye could read this riddle!

To wake from your bright hopes, and feel that this is vanity—to be roused from your crafty plans, and know that all is worthless, is a bitter, but your true destiny. Escape is impossible; for despair is the price of conviction. How many centuries we fled, since Solomon, in his cedar palaces, sung of the vanity of man! Though his harp was golden, and his throne of ivory, his feelings were not less true, and his conviction not less complete. How many sages of all nations, have, since the monarch of Jerusalem, echoed his sad philosophy! yet the bubble still glitters, and still allures and must ever.

The genealogy of Experience is brief; for Experience is the child of Thought, and Thought is the child of Action. We cannot learn men from books, nor can we form, from written descriptions, a more accurate idea of the movements of the human heart than we can of the movements of nature. Man may read all his life, and form no conception of the rush of a mountain torrent or the wing of a forest of pines in a storm; and a man may study in his closet the heart of his fellow-creature for ever, and have no idea of the power of ambition or the strength of revenge.

It is when we have acted ourselves, and have seen others acting; it is when we have laboured ourselves under the influence of our passions, and have seen others labouring; it is when our great desires have been attained, or have been balked;

it is when, after having had the human heart revealed to us, we have the first opportunity to think; it is then, if we can think, that the whole truth lights upon us; it is then, that we ask of ourselves whether it be wise to endure such anxiety of mind, such agitation of spirit, such harrowing of the soul, to gain what may cease to interest to-morrow, or for which, at the best, a few years of enjoyment can alone be afforded; it is then that we waken to the hollowness of all human things; it is then that the sayings of sages, and the warnings of prophets are explained and understood; it is then that we gain EXPERIENCE.

To deem all things vain is not the part of a disappointed man, who may feign it, but who can never feel it. To deem all things vain is the bitter portion of that mind, who, having known the world, dares to think. Experience will arise as often from satiety of joy as from the sting of sorrow. But knowledge of the world is only an acquaintance with the powers of human passions, formed from our observation of our fellow-creatures, and of ourselves. He whose courage has been put to the test—who has relied on the love, or suffered by the hate of woman—has been deceived by man, and has deceived himself—may have as much knowledge of the world at twenty as if he had lived a century. We may travel over the whole globe, and not gain more, although, certainly, we might have more opportunities of seeing the same farce repeated, the same game of broken promises, and balked hopes, false expectation, and self-delusion. Few men were better acquainted with their species than Gil Blas, when he sat down at Liria, and yet he had only travelled in two or three Spanish provinces.

Vivian Grey woke, as we have said, to a conviction of the worthlessness of human fortunes. His character was changed; and this is the most wonderful of all revolutions—a revolution which precept or reason can never bring about, but which a change of circumstances or fortune may. In his career through the world he resembled a turbid mountain river, whose colour had been cleared, and whose course had been calmed in its passage through a lake.

But he commenced by founding his philosophy on a new error; for he fancied himself passionless, which man never is. His trial had been severe, and because he could no longer interest himself in any of the usual pursuits of men, he believed that he could interest himself in none. But doubting of all things, he doubted of himself; and finding himself so changed from what he had been only a year or two before, he felt as if he should not be astonished if he changed again.

With all his grief, he was no cynic—if he smiled on men, it was not in bitterness; if he thought them base, he did not blame them. He pitied those whose baseness, in his opinion, was their sufficient punishment; for nothing they could attain could repay them for the hot contest of their passions. Subdued, but not melancholy; contemplative, but not gloomy; he left his solitude. Careless of what was to come, the whole world was before him. Indifference is at least the boon of sorrow; for none look forward to the future with indifference, who do not look back to the past with dread.

Vivian Grey was now about to join, for the second time, the great and agitated crowd of beings, who are all intent in the search after that undying

coverable talisman—HAPPINESS. That he entertained the slightest hopes of being the successful inquirer, is not for a moment to be imagined. He considered that the happiest moment in human life is exactly the sensation of a sailor who has escaped a shipwreck; and that the mere belief that his wishes are to be indulged, is the greatest bliss enjoyed by man.

How far his belief was correct, how he prospered in this, his second venture on the great ocean of life, it is our business to relate. There were moments, when he wished himself neither experienced nor a philosopher—moments when he looked back to the lost paradise of his innocent boyhood—those glorious hours, when the untroubled river of his life mirrored the cloudless heaven of his hope!

CHAPTER II.

VIVIAN pulled up his horse, as he ascended through the fine beech wood, which leads immediately to the city of Frankfort, from the Darmstadt road. The crowd seemed to increase every moment, but as they were all hastening the same way, his progress was not much impeded. It was Frankfort fair; and all countenances were expressive of that excitement which we always experience at great meetings of our fellow-creatures; whether the assemblies be for slaughter, pleasure, or profit, and whether or not we ourselves join in the banquet, the battle, or the fair. At the top of the hill is an old Roman tower, and from this point the flourishing city of Frankfort, with its picturesque cathedral, its numerous villas, and beautiful gardens in the middle of the fertile valley of the Main, burst upon Vivian's sight. On crossing the bridge over the river, the crowd became almost impassable, and it was with the greatest difficulty that Vivian steered his way through the old, narrow, winding streets, full of tall, ancient houses, with heavy casements and notched gable ends. These structures did not, however, at the present moment, greet the traveller with their usual sombre and antique appearance: their outside walls were, in most instances, entirely covered with pieces of broad-cloth of the most showy colours; red, blue, and yellow predominating. These standards of trade were not merely used for the purpose of exhibiting the quality of the articles sold in the interior; but also of informing the curious traveller, the name and nation of their adventurous owners. Inscriptions in German, French, Russian, English, Italian, and even Hebrew, appeared in striking characters on each woollen specimen; and, as if these were not sufficient to attract the attention of the passenger, an active apprentice or assistant commented in eloquent terms on the peculiar fairness and honesty of his master. The public squares, and other open spaces, and indeed every spot which was secure from the hurrying wheels of the heavy old-fashioned coaches of the Frankfort aristocracy, and the spirited pawings of their sleek and long-tailed coach horses, were covered with large and showy booths, which groined under the accumulated treasures of all countries: French silks and French clocks rivalled Manchester cottons and Sheffield cutlery; and assisted to attract or entrap the gazer, in company with Venetian chains, Neapolitan coral, and Vienna pipe-

heads; here was the booth of a great bookseller, who looked to the approaching Leipzig fair for some consolation for his slow sale, and the bad taste of the people of Frankfort; and there was a dealer in Bologna sausages, who felt quite convinced that in some things the taste of the Frankfort public was by no means to be lightly spoken of. All was bustle, bargaining, and business: there were quarrels and conversation in all languages; and Vivian Grey, although he had no chance either of winning or losing money, was amused.

At last, Vivian gained the High street; and here, though the crowd was not less, the space was greater; and so in time he arrived at the grand hotel of "the Roman Emperor," where he stopped. It was a long time before he could be informed whether Baron Julius von Konigstein at present honoured that respectable establishment with his presence; for, although Vivian did sometimes succeed in obtaining an audience of a hurrying waiter, that animal, when in a hurry, has a peculiar habit of never attending to a question which a traveller addresses to him. In this dilemma Vivian was saluted by a stately-looking personage above the common height. He was dressed in a very splendid uniform of green and gold, covered with embroidery and glittering with frogs. He wore a cocked hat, adorned with a flowing party-coloured plume, and from his broad golden belt was suspended a weapon of singular shape and costly workmanship. This personage was as stiff and stately as he was magnificent. His eyes were studiously preserved from the profanation of meeting the ground, and his well-supported neck seldom condescended to move from its perpendicular position. His coat was buttoned to the chin and over the breast, with the exception of one small aperture, which was elegantly filled up by a delicate white cambric handkerchief, very redolent of rich perfumes. This gorgeous gentleman, who might have been mistaken for an elector of the German Empire, had the German empire been in existence, or the governor of the city at the least, turned out to be the chasseur of the Baron von Konigstein; and, with his courtly assistance, Vivian soon found himself ascending the staircase of the Roman Emperor.

Vivian was ushered into an apartment, in which he found three or four individuals at breakfast. A middle-aged man of very elegant appearance, in a most *outré* morning gown of Parisian chin, sprang up from a many cushioned easy chair of scarlet morocco, and seized his hand as he was announced.

"My dear Mr. Grey! and so you are really kind enough to call upon me—I was so fearful lest you should not come—Eugene was so desirous that we should meet, and has said so many things of you, that I should have been mortified beyond expression if we had missed. I have left notice for you at all the principal hotels in the city. And how is Eugene? his is wild blood in a young student, but a good heart, an excellent heart—and you have been so kind to him—he feels under such particular obligations to you—under very particular obligations, I assure you—and will you breakfast?—Ah! I see you smile at my supposing a horseman unbreakfasted. And have you ridden here from Heidelberg this morning? impossible! Only from Darmstadt! I thought so! You were at the opera then last night. And

is the little signora! We are to gain her-ugh! trust the good people of Frankfort for it! Pray be seated—but really I'm forgetting commonest rules of breeding. Next to the assure of having friends is that of introducing m to each other: Prince, you will have great assure in being introduced to my friend, Mr. y—Mr. Grey—Prince Salvinski! my particu-friend, Prince Salvinski. The Count von Al-burgh! Mr. Grey! my very particular friend, Count von Altenburgh—and the Chevalier de fleurs! Mr. Grey! my most particular friend, Chevalier de Bœffleurs."

After this most hospitable reception from a man had never seen before, Vivian Grey sat down. on Julius von Königstein was minister to the : of Frankfort, from what is termed a "first-;" German power. In person he was short, most delicately formed, his head was a little l, but as he was only five-and-thirty, this could reely be from age; and his remaining hair, ck, glossy, and curling, proved that their com- mon ringlets had not been long lost. His fea- ses were small, but not otherwise remarkable; ept a pair of luscious-looking, liquid, black eyes, great size, which would have hardly become a c, and which gleamed with great meaning and petual animation.

"I understand, Mr. Grey, that you're a regular losopher. Pray, who is the favourite master! nt or Fichte! or is there any other new star o has discovered the origin of our essence, and ved the non-necessity of eating! Count, let help you to a little more of these *saucisses aux uz*. I'm afraid, from Eugene's account, that I're almost past redemption; and I'm sorry to , that although I'm very desirous of being your 'sician and effecting your cure, Frankfort will ply me with very few drugs to work your reco- y. If you could but get me an appointment e again to your delightful London, I might ind- produce some effect; or were I even at tin, or at your delicious Vienna, Count Alten- gh! (the count bowed;) or at that paradise of men, Warsaw, Prince Salvinski!! (the prince red;) or at Paris!!! Chevalier, (the chevalier red;) why then, indeed, you should have some iculty in finding an excuse for being in low its with Julius von Königstein! But Frank-, my dear fellow, is really the most horrible of human places! perfectly provincial—eh! de fleurs?"

"O! perfectly provincial," sighed the French valier, who was also attached to a mission in very city, and who was thinking of his own Boulevards, and his brilliant Tuileries.

"And the men, such brutes! mere citizens!" "And the men, such brutes! mere citizens!" continued the baron, taking a long pinch of snuff, mere citizens! Do you take snuff? I merely p this box for my friends;" and here he ex- ted to Vivian a magnificent gold snuff-box, red with the portrait of a crowned head, sur- ded with diamonds: "A present from the y of Sardinia, when I negotiated the marriage be duke of — and his niece, and settled the y agitated controversy about the right of an- ry fishing on the left bank of the Mediter- a: I merely keep it for my friends; my own ff is here." And the baron pointed very sig- nantly to his waistcoat-pocket cased with tin.

But the women," continued the baron, "the

women—that is a different thing.—There's some amusement among the little bourgeois, who are glad enough to get rid of their commercial beaus; whose small talk, after a waltz, is about bills of exchange, mixed up with a little patriotism about their free city, and some chatter about what they call—'the fine arts;' their horrid collections of 'the Dutch school':—*School*, forsooth! a cabbage, by Gerard Dow! and a candlestick, by Mieris!—And now will you take a basin of soup, and warm yourself, while his highness continues his account of being frozen to death this spring at the top of Mont Blanc: how was it, prince?"

"I think I was at the second attempt!" asked the Pole, collecting himself after this long inter- ruption.—He was, as all Poles are, a great travel- ler; had seen much and described more—though a great liar, he was a dull man; and the baron, who never allowed himself to be outdone in a good story, affected to credit the prince's, and returned him his thanks in kind, which his highness, in spite of his habitual mendacity on the point of his own travels, singularly enough, always credited.

"Did your highness ultimately ascend to the top of Mont Blanc?" asked Vivian.

"No—" said the prince, very slowly, as if he confessed the fact with reluctance: "I did not—I certainly did not; although I did reach a much higher point than I contemplated after my repulse; a point, indeed, which would warrant some individ- uals in asserting that they had even reached the summit; but in matters of science I am scrupu- lously correct, and I certainly cannot say that I did reach the *extreme* top. I say so, because, as I believe, I mentioned before, in matters of science I make it a point to be particularly correct. It is singular, but no less true, that after reaching the fifth glacier, I encountered a pyramidal elevation of, I should calculate, fifteen hundred feet in height. This pyramidal elevation was not perpen- dicular, but had an unhappy inclination forward, of about one inch in eight. It was entirely of solid, green, polished ice. Nature had formed no rut to assist the philosopher.—I paused before this pyramidal elevation of polished, slippery, green ice. I was informed that it was necessary for me to ascend this pyramidal elevation during the night; and this pyramidal elevation of solid, green, polished, slippery ice, Mr. Grey, with an unhappy inclination forward, of one inch in eight from the perpendicular, was the top of Mont Blanc. Saus- sure may say that he ascended it *forever*! For my part, when I beheld this pyramidal elevation, gentlemen, I was not surprised that there was some little variance as to the exact height of this mighty mountain, among all those philosophers who profess to have reached its summit." On this head the travelling Pole would have discoursed for- ever; but the baron, with his usual presence of mind, dexterously interfered.

"You were fortunate, prince; I congratulate you, I've heard of that iceberg before. I remem- ber, my cousin, who ascended the mountain about ten years ago—was it ten years ago?—yes, ten years ago. I remember he slept at the foot of that very pyramidal elevation, in a miserable mountain- hut, intending to climb it in the morning. He was not so well-instructed as your highness, who, doubtless, avoided the diurnal ascent, from fear of the effect of the sun's rays on the slippery ice. Well, my cousin, as I said before, slept in the

mountain-hut; and in the night there came such a fall of snow, that when he awoke, he found the cottage-door utterly blocked up. In fact, the whole building was encrusted in a coating of snow, of above forty feet thick. In this state of affairs, having previously made a nuncupative will, to which the guides were to be witnesses, in case of their escape, he resigned himself to his fate. But Providence interfered; a violent tornado arose. Among other matter, the gigantic snowball was lifted up in the air with as much ease as if it were merely a drop of sleet. It bounded from glacier to glacier with the most miraculous rapidity, and at length vaulted on the Mer-de-glace, where it cracked into a thousand pieces. My cousin was taken up by a couple of young English ladies, who were sketching the Montanvert, with three or four of the principal glaciers for a back-ground. The only inconveniences he sustained were a severe cold, and a slight contusion; and he was so enchanted with the manners of the youngest lady, who, by-the-by, had a very considerable fortune, that he married her the next week." Here the baron took a very long pinch of snuff.

"*Mon Dieu!*" exclaimed the Polish prince, who affected French manners.

"*Mon Dieu!*" exclaimed the Austrian count, who was equally refined.

"*Mon Dieu!*" exclaimed the Frenchman; who, believing his own country superior in every possible particular, was above borrowing even an oath, or an ejaculation, from another land.

"Mr. Grey—I wish that Frankfort could have been honoured by your presence yesterday," said the baron; "there really was an entertainment at the president's which was not contemptible, and a fine display of women, a very fine display! eh, *de Bœffleurs!*"

"Remarkably so, indeed! but what a room!" said the chevalier, shrugging up his shoulders and elevating his eyebrows.

"We want the saloon of Wiesbaden here," said the baron; "with that, Frankfort might be endurable. As it is, I really must give up my appointment; I cannot carry on public business in a city with such a saloon as we met in last night."

"The most imposing room, on the whole, that I ever was in," said Prince Salvinski, "is the chief hall of the seraglio at Constantinople. It's a most magnificent room."

"You have been in the interior of the seraglio, then?" asked Vivian.

"All over it, sir, all over it! The women unfortunately were not there; they were at a summer palace on the Bosphorus, where they are taken regularly every year for an airing in large gold cages."

"And was the furniture of the room you are speaking of very gorgeous?"

"No, by no means; a great deal of gilding and carving, but rude, rude; very much like the exterior carving of a man-of-war; nothing exquisite. I remember the floor was covered with carpets, which, by-the-by, were English. To give you an idea of the size of the room, it might have taken, perhaps, sixty of the largest carpets that you ever saw to cover the floor of it."

"Does your highness take snuff?" asked the baron dryly.

"Thank you, no; I've left off snuff ever since I passed a winter at Baffin's Bay. You've no idea

how very awkward an accidental sneeze is near the pole."

"Your highness, I imagine, has been a great traveller," said Vivian, to the baron's great annoyance. Unfortunately Vivian was not so much used to Prince Salvinski as his excellency.

"I have seen a little of most countries; those things are interesting enough when we are young; but when we get a little more advanced in life, the novelty wears off, and the excitement ceases. I have been in all quarters of the globe. In Europe I have seen every thing except the miracles of Prince Hohenlohe. In Asia I have seen every thing except the ruins of Babylon. In Africa I have seen every thing but Timbuctoo; and in America I have seen every thing except Croker's Mountains."

All this time the Austrian had not joined in the conversation; not, however, because his mouth was shut—that is never the fault of an Austrian. Count von Altenburgh had now, however, finished his breakfast. Next to eating, music is the business in which an Austrian is most interested. The count having had the misfortune of destroying, for the present, one great source of his enjoyment, became very anxious to know what chance there existed of his receiving some consolation from the other. Flinging down his knife and fork, as if he estimated those instruments very slightly, now that their services were useless, and pushing his plate briskly from him, he demanded with an anxious air—"Can any gentleman inform me what chance there is of the signora coming?"

"No news to-day," said the baron, with a mournful look, "I'm almost in despair;—what do you think of the last notes that have been interchanged?"

"Very little chance," said the Chevalier de Bœffleurs, shaking his head; "really these burghers, with all their affected enthusiasm, have managed the business exceedingly ill. No opera can possibly succeed, that is not conducted by a committee of noblemen."

"Certainly!" said the baron; "we're sure then to have the best singers, and be in the gazette the same season."

"Which is much better, I think, Von Konigstein, than paying our bills, and receiving no pleasure."

"But these burghers," continued the baron; "these clumsy burghers, with their affected enthusiasm, as you well observe, who could have contemplated such novices in diplomacy! Whatever may be the issue, I can at least lay my head upon my pillow, and feel that I have done my duty. Did not I, *de Bœffleurs*, first place the negotiation on a basis of acknowledged feasibility and mutual benefit! Who drew the protocol, I should like to know! Who baffled the intrigues of the English minister, the Lord Amelius Fitz-fudge Boroughly! Who sat up one whole night with the signora's friend, the Russian envoy, Baron Squallanoff—and who was it that first arranged about the extra chariot?" and here the representative of a first-rate German power looked very much like a resigned patriot, who feels that he deserves a riband.

"No doubt of it, my dear Von Konigstein," echoed the French charge d'affaires, "and I think whatever may be the result, that I too may look back to this negotiation with no ungratified feelings. Had the arrangement been left, as I had wished, merely to the ministers of the Great Powers, I am

assident that the signora would have been singing a night in our opera house."

"What is the grand point of difference at present?" asked the Austrian.

"A most terrific one," said the baron; "the lady commanded six-and-thirty covers, two tables, two frigees, one of which I arranged should be a ariot;—that at least the town owes to me;—and, me see, what else? merely a town mansion and tablishment. Exerting myself day and night, see terms were, at length, agreed to by the municipality, and the lady was to ride over from armstadt to sign and seal. In the course of her le, she took a cursed fancy to the country villa a great Jew banker, and since that moment the rangement has gone off. We have offered her ery thing—the commandant's country castle—his ly's country farm—the villa of the director of the era—the retreat of our present prima donna—all, in vain. We have even hinted at a temporary resee, a neighbouring royal residence—but all, all eless! The banker and the signora are equally tractable, and Frankfurt is in despair."

"She ought to have signed and sealed at Darmadt," said the count very indignantly.

"To be sure!—they should have closed upon, r caprice, and taken her when she was in the fancy."

"Talking of opera girls," commenced the Polish nce, "I remember the Countess Katszinski—"

"Your highness has nothing upon your plate," ickly retorted the baron, who was in no humour a story.

"Nothing more, I thank you," continued the nce: "as I was saying, I remember the Count- Katszinski—"

"Mr. Brinkel!" announced the chasseur; and entrance of a very singular-looking personage red the company from the Pole's long story.

Mr. Brinkel was a celebrated picture-dealer. He as a man about the middle size, with keen, black as, a sharp nose rather unduly reclining to his hat cheek, and which somewhat singular contorta was, perhaps, occasioned by an habitual and clonic grin which constantly illuminated his tures, and lit up his shining, dark-brown face, ich was of much the same tint as one of his own nished, "deep-toned," modern antiques. There re odd stories about respecting Mr. Brinkel and

"undoubted originals," in which invaluable ces of property he alone professed to deal. But

Baron von Konigstein was, at any rate, not e of Mr. Brinkel's victims; and his excellency as among the rare few, whom a picture-dealer ves it is in vain to attempt to take in: he was an ateur who thoroughly understood art, one of the est characters in existence. The baron and inked were, however, great friends; and at the ment moment, the picture-dealer was assisting

diplomatist in the accomplishment of a very fty and splendid plan. Baron von Konigstein, various reasons, which shall now be nameless,

generally in want of money. Now the baron, d with his perpetual shifts, determined to make rtune at one great coup. He had been in Eng-

cl, and was perfectly aware of the rising feeling the arts which at the present moment daily

trishes in this country. The baron was gene- enough to determine materially to assist in

formation of our national taste. He was, him- forming at a cheap rate a very extensive collec-

tion of original pictures, which he intended to sell

at an enormous price to the National Gallery. Brinkel, in order to secure the *entrée* of the baron's room, which afforded various opportunities of getting off his "undoubted" originals on English and Russian travellers, was in return assisting the minister in his great operation, and acted as his general agent in the affair, on which he was also to get a respectful commission. This business was, of course, altogether a close secret.

And now, before Mr. Brinkel opens his mouth, I may, perhaps, be allowed to say a few words upon a subject in which we are all interested. We are now forming, at great expense, and with greater anxiety, a national gallery. What is the principal object of such an institution? Doubtless to elevate the productions of our own school by affording our artists an opportunity of becoming acquainted with the works of the great masters who have preceded them. Why, then, have we deviated from the course which has been pursued in the formation of all other national galleries? There we shall see arranged in chronological order, specimens of the art in all ages, from the period in which Cimabue rescued it from the Greek painters unto the present time. The excellent is doubtless to be conceived in the study of the excellent; but we should always remember that excellence is relative; and that to the philosopher, the frescos of Masaccio, are perhaps more marvellous than the frescos of the Vatican.

Introduce a young and inexperienced painter to the Assumption of Titian, the Madonna della Pietà of Guido, the Leo of Raffaele, the St. Jerome of Domenichino; and, instead of being incited and inspired, he will leave the chamber in despair. But, before he witnesses these miracles, let him trace on the walls of the gallery the history of his art. Let him view the first hazardous efforts of the inexperienced, wavering, and timid pencil, depicting mummies rather than men—sticks, rather than trees; let him view the unrelieved surface—the ill-proportioned extremities—the harsh and unsubdued tints; then, let him watch perspective stealing into the back-ground; let him witness the attenuated forms, falling into graceless, but energetic groups, let him admire the first deception of *chiaro scuro*; then bring him to the correct design, the skilful foreshortening, the exact extremities; to the rounded limb—to the breathing mouth—to the kindled eye—to the moving group! Add to these all the magic of colour, and lo! a grand picture. We stand before the work with admiring awe; forgetting the means in the result; the artist, in the creator.

Thus gradually, I repeat, should our young artist be introduced to the great masters, whom then the wise pride of human nature would incite him to imitate. Then, too, he would feel that to become a great artist, he must also become a great student; that no sudden inspirations produced the Virgins of Raffaele; that, by slow degrees, by painful observation, by diligent comparison, by frequent experiment, by frequent failure, by the experience of many styles, the examination of all schools, the scholar of Perugino won for himself a name, than which no one is more deeply graven on fame's eternal tablets.

For half the sum that we are giving for a suspicious Correggio, the young English artist would be able to observe all this, and the efforts of the early Germans to boot. I make these observations with no disposition to disparage the management of our Gallery; nor in that carping humour which some

think it safe to assume, when any new measure is proposed, or is being carried into execution. I know the difficulties that the directors have to contend with. I know the greater difficulties that await them; and I have made these observations because I believe there is a due disposition, in the proper quarter, to attend to honest suggestions; and because I feel that the true interests of the arts, have, at this present time, in our monarch, a steady, a sincere, and powerful advocate; one who, in spite of the disheartening opposition of vulgar clamour, and uneducated prejudice, has done more in a short reign for the patronage of the fine arts, than all the dynasties of all the Medicis, Roman and Florentine, together. And now for Mr. Brinkel.

"My dear baron!" commenced the picture-dealer; and here seeing strangers he pulled up, in order to take a calm view of the guests, and see whether there were any unpleasant faces among them; any gentleman to whom he had sold a Leonardo da Vinci, or a Salvator Rosa. All looking very strange, and extremely amiable, Mr. Brinkel felt reassured, and proceeded.

"My dear baron! merely a few words."

"O, my dear Brinkel!—proceed—proceed."

"Another time; your excellency is engaged at present."

"My dear Brinkel! before these gentlemen you may say any thing."

"Your excellency's so kind," continued Mr. Brinkel, though with a hesitating voice, as if he thought that when the nature of the communication was known, the baron might repent his overconfidence. "Your excellency's so kind!"

"My dear little Rembrandt, you may really say any thing."

"Well, then," continued he, half-hesitating, and half in a whisper; "may it please your excellency, I merely stepped in to say, that I am secretly, but credibly informed, that there is a man just arrived from Italy, with a marble *Pietà* of Michel Angelo, stolen from a church in Genoa. The fact is not yet known, even to the police; and long before the Sardinian minister can apply for the acquirer's apprehension, he will be safely stowed in one of my cellars."

"A marble *Pietà*! by Michel Angelo," exclaimed the prince, with great eagerness. The Polish nobleman had a commission from the imperial viceroy of his country, to make purchases of all exquisite specimens of art that he could meet with; as the imperial government was very desirous of reforming the taste of the nation in matters of art, which indeed was in a particularly depraved state. Caricatures had been secretly circulated in the highest circles of Warsaw and Wilna, in which the emperor and his ministers did not look quite as dignified as when shrouded in the sacred sanctuary of the Kremlin; and although the knout, the wheel, and Siberia, suppressed these little intemperances for the moment, still it was imagined by the prime minister, who chanced to be a philosopher, that the only method of permanent prevention was directing the public taste to the study of the beautiful; and that therefore the only mode of saving the sovereign from being squibbed, was the formation of a national gallery. Ours, therefore, is not the only infant institute.

"A marble *Pietà*, by Michel Angelo!" exclaimed the prince; "but a great price, I suppose, demanded?"

"Dear—but cheap;" oracularly answered Mr.

Brinkel; and the sinistral forefinger was cantly applied to the left side of his nose.

"I confess, I am no extravagant admirer of Michel Angelo," said the baron. "In the shades of Santa Croce, sculpture, painted architecture mourn him as their lost Poetry might have been added to the cisters. But in all these glorious arts, the performances were remarkable, they were raculous; and I look in vain for any proof of Michel Angelo, which *per se* stamps a master spirit."

"It was his custom to treat sculptural profession, and in his profession he has left one finished work. The tomb of the Medici not completed, and although there is a magnificent and undefinable moral in his 'Night' which may attract the contemplative, and the poet, yet I imagine few, who have passed that monument from the written description looked on the original without disappointment. His Moeses,—and for a moment I will grant the legislator is as sublime as his warmest maintain,—is only one finished figure of a man, in which it was to have been not so remarkable. But what, if this statue be kindred personification of the same countenance which he has depicted in the brawny prophet of the Sistine chapel, where it would seem that he had mistaken contortion for inspiration, and newness of stature for dilatation of soul! His *Pietàs* and Madonnas unfinished, abound in Italian churches; and though I grant a simplicity is often observable in the countenances of his Virgins, yet that simplicity is often and sometimes sullen. We look in vain for subdued loveliness of the mother of God—celestial resignation which is not akin to As for the corpse, it might suit the widow or the deceased Lazarus; and if not awfully vulgar, the face is at best but that of and not very intellectual rabbi. If we turn to sacred subjects to ancient mythology, I can get that Michel Angelo was the first artist to dare to conceive a god as less than a man in his 'Drunken Bacchus,' presented us with a sovereign of the grape, as the slave of a subject, in a position too clumsy for a figure too dull for a Silenus!"

"Although sculpture was the profession of Michel Angelo, he is still more esteemed by mirrors as a painter. Notwithstanding Sir Reynolds ranks him even above Raffaele, now pretty well understood that his fame must depend upon his Roman frescoes, and not one oil painting—the 'Holy Family,' at Florence. Whether this painting really be in oil is of little moment. I will not say what mind unprejudiced by the doctrines, contaminated by the babble of schools, has upon that boasted treasure of the Tribune any other feeling except disgust? Where the divinity of the boy? Where the inspirer of the mother? Where the proud felicity of the human husband?"

"Of fresco-painting, Michel Angelo was confessedly ignorant, and once threw down the brush in disgust at his own incompetence. The art of art still finds some plan and order in the inexplicable arrangement of the Sistine chapel, while he consoles himself for the ab-

more delightful effects of art, by conjuring up philosophical arrangement of the prophetic, and solution of the dark mysteries of theocracy, he was in silence from the walls, gloomy with the ghastly purgatory, and the unexhilarating parades of 'The last Judgment;' where the Gothic conceptions of the middle ages are again served in the favourite temple of modern Rome, and in a manner in which crude composition seems likely to be exceeded by confused arrangement—in which the distracted eye turns to a thousand points, and is satisfied by none—wearied with tints, rich, though monotonous, are not subdued, and rich, possessing none of the attractions of colour, are meddled with all its faults.

"Michel Angelo was not educated as an architect; but an Italian, and a man of genius, may create a great architect, even without an education. Let us briefly examine his works. The domestic architecture of Florence is due to him; and if we complain of palaces which look like prisons, and lament the perpetual presence of rustic images, we are told that the plans of Michel Angelo were dictated by the necessities of the times; and that, in his age, it was absolutely requisite that every palace should be prepared to become a fortress. If this be admitted as a valid excuse for the absence of beauty, it is against all principles of architecture, that, because in these structures beauty was incompatible with safety, Michel Angelo could therefore have conceived the beautiful. In the chapel of the Medici, we in vain look for the latter; where is that happy union of the sciences, the harmony of proportion, and the harmony of combination, which mark the great architect? Here the harmonious whole, consisting of parts beautiful in detail, and unobtrusive in effect! We see only a dungeon, at once clumsy and condensed.

"If we turn from Florence to Rome, who is there to defend the complexities of the Capitoline galleries, and the absurdities of the Porta Pia? We approach St. Peter's:—although the work of many artists, the design of Michel Angelo has, the whole, been very faithfully adhered to. And St. Peter's is magnificent, who can deny?—How could such a mass of stone, and masonry, and architectural embellishment, such a blaze of gilding, marbles, and mosaics, be otherwise than magnificent? We must not be deceived by the false impression of a general effect which could not be avoided. It is acknowledged that this church, which is the largest in Christendom; which required so many years for its erection; which exhausted the papal treasures, and endangered the papal dominion; affects the mind of the entering stranger, neither with its sublimity, nor its grandeur; and presents no feature which would lead us to suppose, that he was standing in the most celebrated temple in Europe. All our travellers and writers, who have alike experienced disappointment on entering this famous building, have attempted to account for this effect by attributing it to the cause of the exactness of the proportions. But this is like excusing a man's ignorance, by assuring you that he has received a regular education. If exactness of proportion produce poverty of effect, exactness of proportion ceases to be a merit; but is this true? What lover of Palladio can deny that it is the business of the great architect to produce striking and chaste effects from

poor and limited materials; and that exactness of proportion satisfying the mind, and not forcing it to ask for more, does in fact make that which is less appear greater, and that which is great, immense.

"But if I mention the faults of Michel Angelo, I am bid to remember the early period of art in which he lived; I am reminded of the mean elevations of those who preceded him—of the tone which he gave to the conceptions of his successors. Yet many celebrated sculptors were his contemporaries, and surely Leonardo da Vinci was not the scholar of his genius. But in painting especially, he was preceded by Fra Bartolomeo, a miraculous artist;—who, while in his meek Madonnas he has only been equalled by Raffaele, has produced in his St. Mark—his Job—and his Isaiah—creations which might have entitled him to the panegyrics which posterity has so liberally bestowed upon the sculptor of Moses, and the painter of the Sistine Chapel.

"In architecture, I will not notice Brunelleschi; but let me mention this astonishing fact:—San Michele was born only nine or ten years after Michel Angelo, and as he died a few years before him, may be considered his exact contemporary. While the chapel of the Medici was erected at Florence; at Verona, in the chapel of the Pellegrini, San Michele was reproducing ancient beauty, in combinations unknown to the antique. While the barbaric absurdities of the Porta Pia disgraced the capital of the papal state, San Michele produced in the Porta Stupa a structure worthy of ancient Rome. And while Michel Angelo was raising palaces for his Florentine contemporaries, whose dark and rugged elevations are to be excused, on account of the necessity of their being impregnable to the assaults of popular tumult, the streets of Verona, the constant seat of sedition, were filling, under the direction of San Michele, with numberless palaces, which, while they defended their owners alike among the dangers of civil broils and foreign invasion, at the same time presented elevations, for their varied beauty, and classic elegance, have only been equalled by Palladio!"

Nothing is more delightful than to hear the sound of our own voice. The baron's lecture was rather long, but certainly unlike most other lecturers, he understood his subject. Before Vivian could venture an observation in defence of the great Florentine, the door opened, and Ernstorff handed a despatch to the baron, recommending it to his excellency's particular attention.

"Business, I suppose," said the plenipotentiary: "it may wait till to-morrow."

"From M. Clarionet, your excellency."

"From M. Clarionet?" eagerly exclaimed the baron, and tore open the epistle. "Gentlemen! gentlemen! gentlemen! congratulate me—congratulate yourselves—congratulate Frankfort—such news—it is really too much for me," and the diplomatist, overcome, leaned back in his chair.—"She is ours, Salvinski! she is ours, Von Altenburgh! she is ours, my dear De Bœffleurs! Grey, you're the happiest fellow in Christendom; the signora has signed and sealed—all is arranged—she sings to-night! What a fine spirited body is this Frankfort municipality! what elevation of soul! what genuine enthusiasm!—eh, De Bœffleurs?"

"Most genuine!" exclaimed the chevalier, who

hated German music with all his heart, and was now humming an air from the Dame Blanche.

"But mind, my dear fellows—this is a secret, a cabinet secret—the municipality are to have the gratification of announcing the event to the city in a public decree—it is but fair. I feel that I have only to hint, to secure your silence."

At this moment, with a thousand protestations of secrecy, the party broke up, each hastening to have the credit of first spreading the joyful intelligence through their circles, and of depriving the Frankfort senate of their hard-earned gratification. The baron, who was in high spirits, ordered the carriage to drive Vivian round the ramparts, where he was to be introduced to some of the most fashionable beauties, previous to the evening triumph. Mr. Brinkel, disappointed at present of increasing, through the assistance of the Polish prince, any collection in the North, directed his subtle steps up another flight of the staircase of the Roman Emperor, where lodged an English gentleman, for whom Mr. Brinkel had a very exquisite *morceau*; having received the night before from Florence a fresh consignment of Carlo Dolce's.

CHAPTER III.

VIVIAN passed a week very agreeably at Frankfort. In the baron and his friends he found the companions that he had need of; their conversation and pursuits diverted his mind without engaging his feelings, and allowed him to pause and think. There were moments, indeed, when he found in the baron a companion neither frivolous nor uninteresting. His excellency had travelled in most countries, and had profited by his travels. His taste for the fine arts was equalled by his knowledge of them; and his acquaintance with many of the most eminent men of Europe enriched his conversation with a variety of anecdotes, to which his lively talents did ample justice. He seemed fond, at times, of showing Vivian that he was not a mere artificial man of the world, destitute of all feelings, and thinking only of himself: he recurred with satisfaction to moments of his life, when his passions had been in full play; and, while he acknowledged the errors of his youth with candour, he excused them with grace. In short, Vivian and he became what the world calls *friends*; that is to say, they were men who had no objection to dine in each other's company, provided the dinner were good; assist each other in any scrape, provided no particular personal responsibility were incurred by the assistant; and live under the same roof, provided each were master of his own time. Vivian and the baron, indeed, did more than this—they might have been described as *very particular friends*—for his excellency had persuaded our hero to accompany him for the summer to the baths of Ems, a celebrated German watering-place, situated in the dutchy of Nassau, in the vicinity of the Rhine.

On the morrow they were to commence their journey. The fair of Frankfort, which had now lasted nearly a month, was at its close. A bright sunshiny afternoon was stealing into twilight, when Vivian, escaping from the principal street, and the attractions of the Braunfels, or chief shops under the Exchange, directed his steps to some of

the more remote and ancient streets. In crossing a little square, his attention was excited by a crowd, which had assembled round a conjuror; who, from the top of a small cart, which he had converted into a stage, was haranguing, in front of a green curtain, an audience with great fervency, and apparently with great effect; at least Vivian judged so, from the loud applause which constantly burst forth. The men pressed nearer, shouted, and clapped their hands; and the anxious mothers struggled to lift their brats higher in the air, that they might early form a due conception of the power of magic; and learn that the maternal threats which were sometimes extended to them at home, were not mere idle boasting. Altogether, the men with their cocked hats, stiff holiday coats, and long pipes; the women with their glazed gowns of bright fancy patterns, close lace caps, or richly chased silver head-gear; and the children with their gaping mouths and long heads of hair, offered very quaint studies for a Flemish painter. Vivian became also one of the audience, and not an uninterested one.

The appearance of the conjuror was very peculiar. He was not much more than five feet high, but so slightly formed, that he reminded you rather of the boy than the dwarf. The upper part of his face was even delicately moulded; his sparkling black eyes became his round forehead, which was not too much covered by his short, glossy, black hair; his complexion was clear, but quite olive; his nose was very small and straight, and contrasted singularly with his enormous mouth, the thin, bluish lips of which were seldom closed, and consequently did not conceal his large square teeth, which, though very white, were set apart, and were so solid that they looked almost like double teeth. This enormous mouth, which was supported by large jawbones, attracted the attention of the spectator so keenly, that it was some time before you observed the prodigious size of the ears, which also adorned this extraordinary countenance. The costume of this singular being was not less remarkable than his natural appearance. He wore a complete under-dress of pliant leather, which fitted close up to his throat, and down to his wrists and ankles, where it was clasped with large fastenings either of gold or some gilt material. This, with the addition of a species of busar jacket of green cloth, which was quite unadorned, with the exception of its vivid red lining, was the sole covering of the conjuror; who, with a light cap and feather in his hand was now haranguing the spectators. The object of his discourse was a parody of himself, and a satire on all other conjurors. He was the only conjuror—the real conjuror—a worthy descendant of the magicians of old.

"Were I to tell that broad-faced Herr," continued the conjuror, "who is now gaping opposite to me, that this rod is the rod of Aaron, maybe he would call me a liar; yet were I to tell him that he was the son of his father, he would not think it wonderful! And yet, can he prove it! My friends, if I am a liar, the whole world is a liar—and yet any one of you who'll go and proclaim that on the Braunfels, will get his skull cracked. Every truth is not to be spoken, and every lie is not to be punished. I've told you that it's better for you to spend your money in seeing my tricks than it is in swigging schnaps in the chimney corner; and yet, my friends, this may be a lie. I've

told you that the profits of this whole night shall be given to some poor and worthy person in this town; and perhaps I shall give them to myself. What then! I shall speak the truth; and you will perhaps crack my skull. Is this a reward for truth? O, generation of vipers! My friends, what is truth? who can find it in Frankfort! Suppose I call upon you, Mr. Baker, and sup with you this evening; you will receive me as a neighbourly man should, tell me to make myself at home, and do as I like. Is it not so? I see you smile, as if my visit would make you bring out one of the bottles of your best Asmanchausen."

Here the crowd laughed out; for we are always glad when there is any talk of another's hospitality being put to the test, although we stand no chance of sharing the entertainment ourselves. The baker looked foolish, as all men singled out in a crowd do.

"Well, well," continued the conjuror; "I've no doubt his wine would be as ready as your tobacco, Mr. Smith; or a wafle from your basket, my honest cakeseller;" and so saying, with a peculiarly long, thin wand, the conjuror jerked up the basket of an itinerant and shouting pastry-cook, and immediately began to thrust the contents into his mouth with a rapidity ludicrously miraculous.—The laugh now burst out again, but the honest baker now joined in it this time with an easy spirit.

"Be not disconcerted, my little custard-monger; if thou art honest, thou shalt prosper. Did I not say that the profits of this night were for the most poor, and the most honest! If thy stock in trade were in thy basket, my raspberry-puff, verily you are not now the richest there; and so, therefore, if your character be a fair one—that is to say, if you only cheat five times a day, and give a tenth of your cheater to the poor, you shall have the benefit. I ask you again, what is truth? If I sup with the baker, and he tells me to do what I like with all that is his, and I kiss his wife, he will kick me out; yet to kiss his wife might be my pleasure, if her breath were sweet. I ask you again, what is truth? Truth, they say, lies in a well; but perhaps this is a lie. How do we know that truth is not in one of these two boxes?" asked the conjuror, placing his cap on his head, and holding one small snuff-box to a tall, savage-looking one-eyed Bohemian, who, with a comrade, had walked over from the Austrian garrison at Mentz.

"I see but one box," growled the soldier.

"It is because thou hast only one eye, friend; open the other, and thou shalt see two," said the conjuror, in a slow, malicious tone, with his neck extended, and his hand with the hateful box outstretched in it.

"Now, by our black Lady of Altoting, I'll soon stop thy prate, chattering!" bellowed the enraged Bohemian.

"Murder! murder! murder!—the protection of the free city against the Emperor of Austria, the King of Bohemia, Hungary, and Lombardy!" and the knave retreated to the very extremity of the stage, and affecting the most agitating fear, hid himself behind the green curtain, from a side of which his head was alone visible, or rather an immense red tongue, which wagged in all shapes at the unlucky soldier, except when it retired to the interior of his mouth, to enable him to reiterate "*murder!*" and invoke the privileges of the free city of Frankfort.

When the soldier was a little cooled, the conjuror again came forward; and, having moved his small magical table to a corner, and lit two tapers, one of which he placed at each side of the stage, he stripped off his hussar jacket, and began to imitate a monkey; an animal which, by the faint light, in his singular costume, he very much resembled. How amusing were his pranks! He first plundered a rice plantation, and then he cracked cocoa-nuts; then he washed his face, and arranged his toilet with his right paw; and finally, he ran a race with his own tail, which humorous appendage to his body was very wittily performed for the occasion, by a fragment of an old tarred rope. His gambols were so diverting, that they even extracted applause from his enemy, the one-eyed sergeant; and emboldened by the acclamations, from monkeys the conjuror began to imitate men. He first drank like a Dutchman, and having reeled round with a thousand oaths, to the manifold amusement of the crowd, he suddenly began to smoke like a Prussian. Nothing could be more admirable than the look of complacent and pompous stolidity with which he accompanied each puff of his cigar. The applause was continued; and the one-eyed Bohemian sergeant, delighted at the ridicule which was heaped on his military rival, actually threw the mimic some *grotschen*.

"Keep your pence, friend," said the conjuror; "you'll soon owe me more; we have not yet closed accounts. My friends, I have drunk like a Dutchman; I have smoked like a Prussian; and now—I will eat like an Austrian!"—and here the immense mouth of the actor seemed distended even a hundred degrees bigger, while with gloating eyes and extended arms, he again set to at the half-emptied wafle basket of the unhappy pastry-cook.

"Now, by our black Lady of Altoting, thou art an impudent varlet," growled the Austrian soldier.

"You are losing your temper again," retorted the glutton, with his mouth full; "how difficult you are to please!—Well, then, if the Austrians may not be touched, what say you to a Bohemian—a tall one-eyed Bohemian sergeant, with an appetite like a hog, and a liver like a lizard?"

"Now, by our black Lady of Altoting, this is too much!" and the frantic soldier sprang at the conjuror.

"Hold him! hold him!" cried Vivian Grey; for the mob, frightened at the soldier, gave way.

"There is a gentle's voice under a dark cloak!" cried the conjuror; "but I want no assistance;"

and so saying, with a dexterous spring, the conjuror leapt over the heads of two or three staring children, and lighted on the nape of the sergeant's gigantic neck; placing his forefingers behind each of the soldier's ears, he threatened to slit them immediately, if he were not quiet. The sergeant's companion, of course, came to his rescue, but Vivian engaged him, and attempted to arrange matters.

"My friends, my friends, surely, a gay word at a *kermis* is not to meet with military punishment!

What is the use of living in the free city of Frankfort, or, indeed in any other city, if jokes are to be answered with oaths, and a light laugh met with a heavy blow? Avoid bloodshed, if possible; but stand by the conjuror. His business is gibes and jests, and this is the first time that I ever saw Merry Andrew arrested. Come, come, my good fellows!" said he to the soldiers, "we had better be

off: men so important as you and I should not be spectators of these mummeries." The Austrians, who understood Vivian's compliment literally, were not sorry to make a dignified retreat; particularly as the mob, encouraged by Vivian's interference, began to show fight. Vivian also took his departure as soon as he could possibly steal off unnoticed; but not before he had been thanked by the conjuror.

"I knew there was gentle blood under that cloak! If you like to see the Mystery of the Crucifixion, with the Resurrection, and real fireworks, it begins at eight o'clock, and you shall be admitted gratis. I knew there was gentle blood under that cloak, and some day or other when your highness is in distress, you shall not want the aid of ESSPER GEORGE!"

CHAPTER IV.

It was late in the evening when a britchska stopped at the post-house of Coblenz. M. Maas, whom all English travellers must remember, for all must have experienced his genuine kindness, greeted its two inmates with his usual hospitality; but regretted that, as his house was very full, his excellency must have the condescension to sup in the public-room. The passage-boat from Bingen had just arrived; and a portly judge from the Danube, a tall, gaunt Prussian officer, a sketching English artist, two university students, and three or four travelling cloth-merchants, chiefly returning from Frankfort fair, were busily occupied at a long table in the centre of the room, at an ample banquet, in which sour-cROUT, cherry soup, and very savoury sausages were not wanting. So keen were the appetites, and so intense the attention of these worthies, that the entrance of the new comers was scarcely noticed; and the baron and his friend seated themselves very quietly at a small table in the corner of the room, where they waited with due patience for the arrival of one of Monsieur Maas's exquisite little suppers; although hunger, more than once, nearly induced them to join the table of the boat's crew; but as the baron furtively observed, a due terror of the Prussian officer, who, the moment they arrived, took care to help himself to every dish at table, and a proper respect for Ernstorff, prevented a consummation which they devoutly wished for.

For half an hour nothing was heard but the sound of crashing jaws, and of rattling knives and forks. How singular is the sight of a dozen hungry individuals intent upon their prey! what a noisy silence! A human voice was at length heard. It proceeded from the fat judge from the Danube. He was a man at once convivial, dignified, and economical: he had not spoken for two minutes before his character was evident to every person in the room, although he flattered himself that his secret purpose was concealed from all. Tired with the thin Moselle which M. Maas gratuitously allowed to the table, the convivial judge from the Danube wished to comfort himself with a glass of more generous liquor; aware of the price of a bottle of good Rudesheimer, the economical judge from the Danube was desirous of forming a copartnership with one or two gentlemen in the bottle; still more aware of his exalted situation,

the dignified judge from the Danube felt it did not become him to appear in the eyes of any one as an unsuccessful suppliant.

"This Moselle is very thin," observed the judge, shaking his head.

"Very fair table-wine, I think," said the artist, refilling his tumbler, and then proceeding with his sketch, which was a rough likeness, in black chalk, of the worthy magistrate himself.

"Very good wine, I think," swore the Prussian, taking the bottle. With the officer there was certainly no chance.

The cloth-merchants mixed even this thin Moselle with water, and therefore they could hardly be looked upon as boon companions; and the students were alone left. A German student is no flincher at the bottle, although he generally drinks beer. These gentry, however, were no great favourites with the magistrate, who was a loyal man, of regular habits, and no encourager of brawls, duels, and other still more disgraceful outrages; to all which abominations, besides drinking beer and chewing tobacco, the German student is most remarkably addicted: but in the present case, what was to be done? He offered the nearest a pinch of snuff, as a mode of commencing his acquaintance and cultivating his *complaisance*. The German student dug his thumb into the box, and, with the additional aid of the forefinger, sweeping out half its contents, growled out something like thanks, and then drew up in his seat, as if he had too warmly encouraged the impertinent intrusion of a Philistine, to whom he had never been introduced.

The cloth-merchant, ceasing from sipping his meek liquor, and taking out of his pocket a letter, from which he tore off the back, carefully commenced collecting with his forefinger the particles of dispersed snuff in a small pyramid, which, when formed, was dexterously slipped into the paper, then folded up and put into his pocket; the prudent merchant contenting himself for the moment with the refreshment which was afforded to his senses by the truant particles which had remained in his nail.

"Kelner!"—never call a German waiter *garçon*, or else you'll stand a chance of going supperless to bed:—"Kelner! a bottle of Rudesheimer!" bellowed the convivial judge from the Danube, "and if any gentleman or gentlemen would like to join me, they may;" added the economical judge from the Danube, in a more subdued tone. No one answered, and the bottle was put down. The judge slowly poured out the bright yellow fluid into a tall bell glass, adorned with a beautiful and encircling wreath of vine leaves: he held the glass a moment before the lamp, for his eye to drell with still greater advantage on the transparent radiancy of the contents; and then deliberately poured them down his throat, and allowing them to dwell a moment on his palate, he uttered an emphatic "*bah!*" and sucking in his breath, leaned back in his chair. The student immediately poured out a glass from the same bottle, and drank it off. The dignified judge from the Danube gave him a look;—the economical judge from the Danube blessed himself that though his boon companion was a brute, still he would lessen the expense of the bottle, which nearly amounted to a day's pay; and the convivial judge from the Danube again filled his glass—but this was merely

is fair portion. He saw the student drinker; and, although he did not like own enjoyment, he thought it most eep his glass well stored by his side. your highnesses have had a pleasant lood out a man, entering the room as he spoke; and deliberately walking le, he pushed between two of the cloth who quietly made way; and then all square box before him, he immed it, and sweeping aside all the dishes which surrounded him, he began to aces with cups, balls, rings, and other ooking matters which generally accom- rror.

our highnesses have had a pleasant e been thinking of you all the day. ups were arranged.) Next to myself, d for my friends. (Here the rice was I came from Fairyland this morning. ick was executed.) Will any gentle- e a handkerchief! Now, sir, tie any oose:—tighter—tighter—tight as you as you can:—now pull!—Why, sir, r knot!" Here most of the company dly laughed at a trick which had m before a hundred times. But the dge from the Danube had no taste for amusements; and, besides, the convi- rom the Danube thought that all this d the pleasure of his wine, and pre- from catching the flavour of his r. Moreover, the judge from the s not in a very good humour. The dent appeared to have very little idea and regulations of a fair partnership; did he not regulate his draughts by the temple of his bottle companion, but d the glass of his University friend, offered the precious green flask to his he cloth-merchant. That humble in- dently refused the proffer. The very circumstance of having his health r stranger, seemed alone to have pro- at impression upon him; and adding : water to his already diluted potation, oet reverently to the student, who, in not notice him. All these little circum- ented the judge from the Danube from is usual condescending and amiable d therefore the judge from the Danube gh at the performances of our friend rge: for I need hardly mention that the s no other than that quaint personage. our did not escape the lord of the cups who, as was his custom, immediately ment him.

our highness choose a card?" asked an of the judge, with a most humble

too much for the magistrate.
!"

George looked very penitent, as if he felt en a great liberty by his application; ompensate for his incorrect behaviour, e magistrate whether he would have the lend him his watch. The judge was and determined to give the intruder a

; I am not one of those who can be icks that his grandfather knew."

"Grandfather!" shrieked Essper; "what a wonderful grandfather yours must have been! All my tricks are fresh from Fairyland this morning. Grandfather, indeed! Pray, is this your grandfather?" and here the conjuror, leaning over the table, with a rapid catch drew out from the fat paunch of the judge, a long grinning wooden figure, with great staring eyes, and the parrot nose of a punchinello. The laugh which followed this humorous specimen of sleight-of-hand, was loud, long, and universal. The judge lost his temper; and Essper George took the opportunity of the confusion to drink off the glass of Rudesheimer, which stood, as we have mentioned, ready-charged at the magistrate's elbow.

The keeper now went round to collect the money of the various guests who had partaken of the boat-supper; and, of course, charged the judge extra for his ordered bottle, bowing at the same time very low, as was proper to so good a customer. These little attentions at inns encourage expenditure. The judge tried at the same time the bottle, which he found empty, and applied to his two boon companions for their quota; but the students affected a sort of brutal surprise at any one having the presumption to imagine that they were going to pay their proportion; and flinging down their money for their own supper on the table, they retired; the frantic magistrate, calling loudly for M. Maas, followed them out of the room.

Essper George stood moralizing at the table, and emptying every glass whose contents were not utterly drained; with the exception of the tumblers of the cloth-merchants, of whose liquor he did not approve.

"Dear me! poor man! to get only one glass out of his own bottle! I wish I hadn't taken his wine; it was rather sour. Ay! call—call away for M. Maas: threaten—threaten—threaten as you will. Your grandfather will not help you here. Blood out of a wall and money out of a student come the same day.—Ah! is your highness here?" said Essper, turning round to our two travellers with affected surprise, although he had observed them the whole time. "Is your highness here? I've been looking for you through Frankfort this whole morning. There!—it will do for your glass. It is of chamois leather; and I made it myself from a beast I caught last summer in the valley of the Rhone." So saying, he threw over Vivian's neck a neat chain, or cord, of very curiously-worked leather.

"Who the devil's this, Grey?" asked the baron.

"A funny knave, whom I once saved from a threshing, or something of the kind, which I do him the justice to say he well deserved."

"Who the devil's this?" said Essper George. "Why that's exactly the same question I myself asked when I saw a tall, pompous, proud fellow, dressed like a peacock on a May morning, standing at the door just now. He looked as if he'd pass himself off for an ambassador at least; but I told him that if he got his wages paid, he was luckier than most servants. Was I right, your excellency?"

"Poor Ernestorff!" said the baron, laughing. "Yes; he certainly gets paid. Here,—you're a clever varlet; fill your glass."

"No, no, no, no wine—no wine.—Don't you hear the brawling, and nearly the bloodshed, which

are going on up-stairs about a sour bottle of Rudesheimer ! and here I see two gentles who have ordered the best wine merely to show that they are masters and not servants of the green peacock—and lo ! cannot get through a glass—Lord ! Lord ! what is man ? If my fat friend and his grandfather would but come down stairs again, here is liquor enough to make wine and water of the Danube ; for he comes from thence by his accent. No, no, I'll have none of your wine ; keep it to throw on the sandy floor, that the dust may not hurt your delicate shoes, nor dirt the hand of the gentlemen in green and gold when he cleans them for you in the morning."

Here the baron laughed again, and, as he bore his impertinence, Easper George immediately became polite.

"Does your mighty highness go to Ems ?"

"We hardly know, my friend."

"O ! go there, gentlemen. I've tried them all—Aix-la-Chapelle, Spa, Wisbaden, Carlsbad, Piermont, every one of them ; but what are these to Ems ! there we all live in the same house, and eat from the same table. When there, I feel that you are all under my protection—I consider you all as my children. Besides, the country—how delightful ! the mountains—the valleys—the rivers—the woods—and then the company, so select ! no sharpers—no adventurers—no black-legs : at Ems you can be taken in by no one except your intimate friend. O ! go to Ems, go to Ems, by all means. I'd advise you, however, to send the gentleman in the cocked hat on before you to engage rooms ; for I can assure you that you'll have a hard chance ; the baths are very full."

"And how do you get there, Easper !" asked Vivian.

"Those are subjects on which I never speak," answered the conjuror, with a solemn air.

"But have you all your stock in trade with you, my good fellow ? Where's the mystery ?"

"Sold, sir, sold ! I never keep to any thing long. Variety is the mother of enjoyment. At Ems I shall not be a conjuror : but I never part with my box. It takes no more room than one of those medicine chests, which I dare say you've got with you in your carriage, to prop up your couple of shattered constitutions."

"By Jove ! you're a merry, impudent fellow," said the baron ; "and if you like to get up behind my britchka, you may."

"No, no, no ; a thousand thanks to your mighty highnesses, I carry my own box, and my own body, and I shall be at Ems to-morrow in time enough to receive your lordships."

CHAPTER V.

IN a delightful valley of Nassau, formed by the picturesque windings of the Taunus mountains, and on the banks of the noisy river Lahn, stands an immense brick pile, of very irregular architecture, which nearly covers an acre of ground. This building was formerly a favourite palace of the ducal house of Nassau ; but for reasons which I cannot give, and which the reader will perhaps not require, the present prince has thought proper to let out the former residence of his family, as a hotel

for the accommodation of the company, who in the season frequent this, the most lovely spot in his lovely little dutchy. This extensive building contains two hundred and thirty rooms, and eighty baths ; and these apartments, which are under the management of an official agent, who lives in the "Princely Bathing House," for such is its present dignified title, are to be engaged at fixed prices, which are marked over the doors. All the rooms in the upper story of the Princely Bathing House open on, or are almost immediately connected with, a long corridor, which extends the whole length of the building. The ground floor, besides the space occupied by the baths, also affords a very spacious promenade, arched with stone, and surrounded with stalls, behind which are marshalled venders of all the possible articles which can be required by the necessities of the frequenters of a watering-place. There you are greeted by the jeweller of the Palais Royal, and the *mercant de mode* of the Rue de la Paix ; the print-seller from Manheim, and the china-dealer from Dresden ; and other little speculators in the various fancy articles which abound in Vienna, Berlin, Geneva, Basle, Strasburgh, and Lausanne ; such as pipes, costumes of Swiss peasantry, crosses of Mont Blanc crystal, and all varieties of national *bijouterie*. All things may here be sold, save those which administer to the nourishment of the body, or the pleasure of the palate. Let not those of my readers, who have already planned a trip to the sweet vales of the Taunus, be frightened by this last rather alarming sentence. At Ems, "estables and drinkables" are excellent, and abundant ; but all those are solely supplied by the *restaureur*, who farms the monopoly from the duke. This gentleman, who is a pupil of Beauvilliers, and who has conceived an exquisite *cuisine*, by adding to the lighter graces of French cookery something of the more solid virtues of the German, presides in a saloon of immense size and magnificent decoration ; in which, during the season, upwards of three hundred persons frequent the table d'hôte. It is the etiquette at Ems, that, however distinguished, or however humble, the rank of the visitors, their fare, and their treatment must be alike. In one of the most aristocratic countries in the world, the sovereign prince, and his tradesman subject, may be found seated in the morning at the same board, and eating from the same dish ; as in the evening they may be seen staking on the same colour at the gaming-table, and sharing in the same interest at the Redoute.

I have said that the situation of Ems was delightful. The mountains which form the valley are not, as in Switzerland, so elevated that they confine the air, or seem to impede the facility of breathing. In their fantastic forms, the picturesque is not lost in the monotonous ; and in the rich covering of their various woods, the admiring eye finds, at the same time, beauty and repose. Opposite the ancient palace, on the banks of the Lahn, are the gardens. In these, in a neat pavilion, a band of excellent musicians seldom cease from enchanting the visitors by their execution of the most favourite specimens of German and Italian music. Numberless acacia arbours, and retired sylvan seats are here to be found, where the student, or the contemplative, may seek refuge from the noise of his more gay companions, and the tedium of eternal conversation. Here too a little

will seldom be disturbed; and in some spots of *tête-à-tête*, we all know how very necessary and how very delightful are the perfumes of roses, and the shade of secret trees, and the soft sound of running waters. In these gardens, also, are the billiard-room, and another saloon in which each night meet, not merely those are interested in the mysteries of *rouge et noir* and the chances of *roulette*; but, in general, the whole of the company, male and female, who frequent the baths. In quitting the gardens moment, we must not omit mentioning the smoking booth of our friend the *restaurateur*, where coffee, clear and hot, exquisite *confitures*, *saus liqueurs*, and particularly genuine manna of Zara are never wanting. Nor should I omit the glittering pennons of the gay boats which glide along the Lahn, nor the handsome rapiers, who, with their white saddles and red breeches, seem not unworthy of the princesses whom they sometimes bear. The gardens, with their rows of lime-trees, which are farther on, near the banks of the river, afford easy promenades to the sick and debilitated; but the more robust and active need not fear monotony in the valley of the Lahn. If they sigh for the champaign country, they can climb the wild passes of the encircling mountains, and from their tops enjoy the most magnificent views of the Rhineland. There they gaze on that mighty river flowing through the fertile plain, which, at the same time, it nourishes and adorns,—bounded on each side by the remains of every form, clothed with wood or steel with castles. Or, if they fear the fatigues of a descent, they may wander farther up the river, and in the wild dells, romantic forests, and ruins of Stein and Nassau, conjure up the memory of feudal tyranny, when the forest was nearly free land; and he who outraged the laws, nearly one who did not suffer from their author-

sides the Princely Bathing House, I must mention, that there was another old and extensive building near it, which, in very full seasons, also accommodated visitors on the same system as the first. At present, this adjoining building was occupied by a Russian archduke, who had retired for the season.

Each is a faint description of Ems, a place of unique character; for it is a watering-place with every convenience, luxury, and accommodation; and yet without shops, streets, or noise.

The baron and Vivian were fortunate in finding a room for the baths were very full; the extraordinary beauty of the weather having occasioned an early season. They found themselves at the baths early on the morning after their arrival at Ems, and at three o'clock in the same day, had their places at the dinner-table in the great hall. At the long table upwards of two hundred and fifty guests were assembled, of different ages, and very different characters. There was an English, intriguing Greek, who served well as an imperial master, the Russian. The order of the patron saint of Moscow, and the glittering of other nations which sparkled on his green uniform, told how well he had laboured for the rest of all other countries except his own; but clear, pale complexion, his delicately-trimmed eyebrows, his lofty forehead, his arched eyebrow,

and his Eastern eye, recalled to the traveller, in spite of his barbarian trappings, the fine countenances of the Ægean; and became a form which apparently might have struggled in Thermopylae. Next to him was the Austrian diplomatist, the Scion of all cabinets; in whose gay address, and rattling conversation, you could hardly recognise the sophistical defender of unauthorized invasion and the subtle inventor of holy alliances, and imperial leagues. Then came the rich usurer from Frankfort, or the prosperous merchant from Hamburg; who, with his wife and daughters, were seeking some recreation from his flourishing counting-house, in the sylvan gayeties of a German bathing-place. Flirting with these, was an adventurous dancing-master from Paris, whose profession at present was kept in the background, and whose well-curled black hair, diamond pin, and frogged coat, hinted at the magnifico incog.; and also enabled him, if he did not choose in time to follow his own profession, to pursue another one, which he had also studied, in the profitable mystery of the Redoute. There were many other individuals, whose commonplace appearance did not reveal a character which perhaps they did not possess. There were officers in all uniforms, —and there were some uniforms without officers. But all looked perfectly *comme il faut*, and on the whole very select; and if the great persons endeavoured for a moment to forget their dignity, still these slight improprieties were amply made up by the affected dignity of those little persons who had none to forget.

"And how like you the baths of Ems?" asked the baron of Vivian; "we shall get better seats to-morrow, and perhaps be among those whom you shall know. I see many friends, and some agreeable ones. In the mean time, you must take to-day a good dinner, and I'll amuse you, and assist your digestion by putting you up to all the curious characters whom you are dining with." So saying, the baron seized the soup-ladle.

At this moment a party entered the room, who were rather late in their appearance, but who attracted the attention of Vivian so keenly, that he almost forgot the gay crowd on whom he was lately gazing with such amusement. The group consisted of three persons; a very handsome fashionable-looking young man, who supported on each arm a female. The lady on his right arm was apparently of about five-and-twenty years of age. She was of majestic stature; her complexion of untinted purity. Her features were like those conceptions of Grecian sculptors, which, in moments of despondency, we sometimes believe to be ideal. Her full eyes were of the same deep blue as a mountain-lake, and gleamed from under their long lashes, as that purest of waters beneath its fringing sedge. Her light brown hair was braided from her high forehead, and hung in long full curls over her neck; the mass gathered up into a Grecian knot, and confined by a bandeau of cambric. She wore a superb dress of the richest black velvet, whose folding drapery was confined round a waist which was in exact symmetry with the proportions of her full bust, and the polished roundness of her bending neck. On the little finger of an ungloved hand, sparkled a diamond of unknown value, which was linked by a small Venetian chain to a gorgeous bracelet of the most precious stones. The countenance of the lady was dignified, with

out any expression of pride; and reserved without any of the harshness of austerity. In gazing on her, the enraptured spectator for a moment believed that Minerva had forgotten her severity, and had entered into a delightful rivalry with Venus.

Her companion was much younger, much shorter, and of slender form. The long tresses of her chestnut hair shaded her oval face. Her small aquiline nose, bright hazel eyes, delicate mouth, and the deep colour of her lips, were as remarkable as the transparency of her complexion. The flush of her cheek was singular—it was of a brilliant pink: you may find it in the lip of an Indian shell. The blue veins played beneath her arched forehead, like lightning beneath a rainbow. She was simply dressed in white, and a damask rose, half hid in her clustering hair, was her only ornament. This lovely creature glided by Vivian Grey almost unnoticed, so fixed was his gaze on her companion. Yet, magnificent as was the style of *LADY MADELEINE TREVOR*, there were few who preferred even her commanding graces to the softer beauties of *VIOLET FANE*.

This party having passed Vivian, proceeded to the top of the room, where places had been kept for them. Vivian's eye watched them till they were lost among surrounding visitors: their peculiar loveliness could not deceive him.

"English, no doubt," observed he to the baron; "who can they be?"

"I haven't the least idea—that is, I don't exactly know—that is, I think they are English," answered the baron, in such a confused manner that Vivian stared. Whether his excellency observed his friend's astonishment or not, I cannot say; but, after musing a moment, he recovered himself.

"The unexpected sight of a face we feel that we know, and yet cannot immediately recognise, is extremely annoying—it is almost agitating. They are English; the lady in black is Lady Madeleine Trevor; I knew her in London."

"And the gentleman?" asked Vivian, rather anxiously: "is the gentleman a Mr. Trevor?"

"No, no, no; Trevor, poor Trevor is dead, I think—is, I'm sure, dead. That, I am confident, is not he. He was of the ——— family, and was in office when I was in England. It was in my diplomatic capacity that I first became acquainted with him. Lady Madeleine was, and as you see is, a charming woman—a very charming woman is Lady Madeleine Trevor."

"And the young lady with her?"

"The young lady with her—I cannot exactly say—I do not exactly know. Her face is familiar to me, and yet I cannot remember her name. She must have been very young, as you may see, when I was in England, she cannot now be above eighteen. Miss Fane must, therefore, have been very young when I was in England. Miss Fane!—how singular I should have mentioned her name!—that is her name—Violet Fane—a cousin, or some relation of Lady Madeleine's;—good family, very good family.—Shall I help you to some soup?"

Whether it was from not being among his friends, or some other cause, I know not, but the baron was certainly not in his usual spirits this day at dinner. Conversation, which with him was generally as easy as it was brilliant—like a fountain at the same time sparkling and fluent—was

evidently constrained. For a few minutes he talked very fast, and was then uncommunicative, absent, and dull. He moreover drank a great deal of wine, which was not his custom; but the grape did not inspire him. Vivian found amusement in his next neighbour, a forward, bustling man, clever in his talk, very fine, but rather vulgar. He was the manager of a company of Austrian actors, and had come to Ems on the chance of forming an engagement for his troop, who generally performed at Vienna. He had been successful in his adventure, the archduke having engaged the whole band at the New House, and in a few days the troop were to arrive; at which time, the manager was to drop the character of a travelling gentleman, and cease to dine at the table d'hôte of Ems. From this man Vivian learned that Lady Madeleine Trevor had been at the baths for some time before the season commenced; that at present, hers was the party which, from its long stay, and eminent rank, gave the tone to the amusements of the place; the influential circle, which those who have frequented watering-places have often observed, and which may be seen at Ems, Spa, or Piermont, equally as at Harrogate, Tunbridge Wells, or Cheltenham.

CHAPTER VI.

WHEN dinner was finished, the party broke up, and most of them assembled in the gardens. The baron, whose countenance had assumed its wonted cheerfulness, and who excused his previous dulness by the usual story of a sudden headache, proposed to Vivian to join the promenade. The gardens were very full, and the baron recognised many of his acquaintance.

"My dear colonel,—who possibly expected to meet you here? why! did you dine in the saloon? I only arrived this morning—this is my friend, Mr. Grey—Colonel von Trumpetson."

"An Englishman, I believe!" said the colonel, bowing. He was a starch *militaire*, with a blue frock-coat buttoned up to his chin, a bald head with a few grey hairs, and long thin mustachios like a mandarin's. "An Englishman, I believe;—pray, sir, can you inform me whether the waistcoats of the household troops, in England, have the double braid?"

"Sir!" said Vivian.

"I esteem myself particularly fortunate in meeting with an English gentleman, your excellency. It was only at dinner to-day that a controversy arose between Major von Musquetoon, and the Prince of Buttonstein, about the waistcoats of the English household troops. As I said to the prince, you may argue forever, for at present we cannot decide the fact. How little did I think, when I parted from the major, that, in a few minutes, I should be able to settle this important question beyond a doubt;—I esteem myself particularly fortunate in meeting with an Englishman."

"I regret to say, colonel, that far from being able to decide this important question, I hardly know what household troops really are."

"Sir, I wish you good morning," said the colonel, very dryly; and, staring very keenly at Vivian, he walked away.

"Well, that's beautiful, Grey, to get rid of that horrible old bore with such exquisite tact—Double braid! an old dunderpate!—he should be drummed out of the regiment; but he's good enough to fight, I suppose," added the plenipotentiary, with a smile and shrug of the shoulders, which seemed to return thanks to Providence, for having been educated in the civil service.

At this moment Lady Madeleine Trevor, leaning on the arm of the same gentleman, passed, and the baron bowed. The bow was stiffly returned.

"You know her ladyship, then!—well!"

"I did know her," said the baron, "but I see from her bow, that I am at present in no very high favour. The truth is, she is a charming woman, but I never expected to see her in Germany, and there was some little commission of hers which I neglected—some little order for Eau de Cologne—or a message about a worked pocket handkerchief, or a fancy shawl, which I utterly forgot;—and then, I never wrote!—and you know, Grey, that these little sins of omission are never forgiven by women."

"My dear friend De Konigstein—one pinch! one pinch!" chirped out a little old, odd-looking man, with a very *poudré* head, and dressed in a costume in which the glories of *vieille cour* seemed to retire with reluctance. A diamond ring twinkled on the snuffy hand, which was encircled by a rich ruffle of dirty lace. The brown coat was not modern, and yet not quite such a one as was worn by its master, when he went to see the king dine in public, at Versailles, before the Revolution:—large silver buckles still adorned the well-polished shoes; and silk stockings, whose hue was originally black, were picked out, with clock-work of gold.

"My dear marquis—I'm most happy to see you; will you try the *boulangero*?"

"With pleasure!—with pleasure!—A-a-h! what a box! a *Louis-quateurze*, I think!"

"O, no! by no means so old."

"Pardon me, my dear fellow, my dear De Konigstein; I've studied the subject! I think a *Louis-quateurze*."

"I tell you I bought it in Sicily."

"A-a-h!" slowly exclaimed the little man: then shaking his head—"I think a *Louis-quateurze*?"

"Well, have it so, if you like, marquis."

"A-a-h! I thought so—I thought a *Louis-quateurze*. Will you try mine!—will your friend try a pinch!—does he take snuff!—what box has he got!—is it an old one!—is it a *Louis-quateurze*?"

"He doesn't take snuff at all."

"A-a-h! if he did, perhaps he'd have a box—perhaps it would be an old one—most likely a *Louis-quateurze*."

"Very probably," said the baron.

"A-a-h! I thought so," said the old man.

"Well, good afternoon," said the baron, passing on.

"My dear De Konigstein—one pinch—one pinch—you've often said you have a particular regard for me."

"My dear marquis!"

"A-a-h! I thought so—you've often said you'd serve me, if possible."

"My dear marquis, be brief."

"A-a-h! I will—there's a cursed crusty old

Prussian officer here—one Colonel de Trumpetson."

"Well, my dear marquis, what can I do! you're surely not going to fight him!"

"A-a-h! no, no, no—I wish you to speak to him."

"Well, well, what?"

"He takes snuff."

"What's that to me?"

"He's got a box."

"Well!"

"It's a *Louis-quateurze*—couldn't you get it for me?"

"Good morning to you," said the baron, pulling on Vivian.

"You've had the pleasure, Grey, of meeting this afternoon two men, who have each only one idea. Colonel von Trumpetson, and the Marquis de la Tabatière, are equally tiresome. But are they more tiresome than any other man who always speaks on the same subject? We are more irritable, but not more wearied, with a man who is always thinking of the pattern of a button-hole, or the shape of a snuff-box, than with one who is always talking about pictures, or chemistry, or politics. The true bore is that man who thinks the world is only interested in one subject, because he, himself, can only comprehend one."

Here the Lady Madeleine passed again, and this time the baron's eyes were fixed on the ground.

A buzz and a bustle at the other end of the gardens, to which the baron and Vivian were advancing, announced the entry of the archduke. His imperial highness was a tall man, with a quick piercing eye, which was prevented from giving to his countenance the expression of intellect which it otherwise would have done, by the dull and almost brutal effect of his flat, Calmuck nose. He was dressed in a plain, green uniform, adorned by a single star; but his tightened waist, his stiff stock, and the elaborate attention which had evidently been bestowed upon his mustachios, denoted the military fop. The archduke was accompanied by three or four stiff and stately-looking personages, in whom the severity of the martinet seemed sunk in the severity of the *said-de-camp*.

The baron bowed very low to the prince, as he drew near, and his highness, taking off his cocked-hat with an appearance of cordial condescension, made a full stop. The silent gentlemen in the rear, who had not anticipated this suspense in their promenade, almost foundered on the heels of their royal master; and frightened at the immensity of the profanation, forgot their stiff pomp in a precipitate retreat of half a yard.

"Baron," said his highness, "why have I not seen you at the New House?"

"I have but this moment arrived, may it please your imperial highness."

"Your companion," continued the archduke, pointing very graciously to Vivian.

"My intimate friend, my fellow-traveller, and an Englishman. May I have the honour of presenting Mr. Grey to your highness?"

"Any friends of the Baron von Konigstein I shall always feel great pleasure in having presented to me. Sir, I feel great pleasure in having you presented to me. Sir, you ought to be proud of the name of an Englishman—sir, the English are a noble nation—sir, I have the highest respect for the English nation!"

Vivian of course bowed very low, and of course made a very proper speech on the occasion, which, as all speeches of that kind should be, was very dutiful and quite inaudible.

"And what news from Berlin, baron? let us move on," and the baron, with Vivian on his arm, turned with the archduke. The silent gentlemen, settling their mustachios, followed in the rear. For about half an hour, anecdote after anecdote, scene after scene, caricature after caricature, were poured out with prodigal expenditure for the amusement of his highness; who did nothing during the exhibition but smile, stroke his whiskers, and at the end of the best stories fence with his forefinger at the baron's side—with a gentle laugh, and a mock shake of the head—and a "Eh! Von Konigstein, you're too bad!" Here Lady Madeleine Trevor passed again, and the archduke's hat nearly touched the ground. He received a most gracious bow.

"Finish the story about Salvinski, baron, and then I'll introduce you for a reward to the most lovely creature in existence—a countrywoman of yours, Mr. Grey—Lady Madeleine Trevor."

"I have the honour of a slight acquaintance with her ladyship," said the baron; "I had the pleasure of knowing her in England."

"Indeed! O, most fortunate mortal! I see she has stopped, talking to some stranger. Let us turn and join her."

The archduke and the two friends accordingly turned, and of course the silent gentlemen in the rear followed with due precision.

"Lady Madeleine!" said his highness, "I flattered myself for a moment that I might have had the honour of presenting to you a gentleman for whom I have great esteem; but he has proved to me this moment that he is more fortunate than myself, since he had the honour before me of an acquaintance with Lady Madeleine Trevor."

"I have not forgotten Baron von Konigstein," said her ladyship, with a serious air; "may I ask your highness how you prospered in your negotiation with the Austrian troop?"

"Perfectly successful!—perfectly successful!—Inspired by your ladyship's approbation, my steward has really done wonders. He almost deserves a diplomatic appointment for the talent which he has shown, but what should I do without Cracowsky? Lady Madeleine, can you conceive what I should do without Cracowsky?"

"Not the least," said her ladyship, very good-naturedly.

"Cracowsky is every thing to me—every thing. It is impossible to say what Cracowsky is to me. I owe every thing to Cracowsky. To Cracowsky I owe being here." The archduke bowed very low, for his eulogium on his steward also conveyed a compliment to her ladyship. The archduke was certainly right in believing that he owed his summer excursion to Ems to his steward. That wily Pole, regularly every year put his imperial master's summer excursion up at auction, and according to the biddings of the proprietors of the chief baths, did he take care that his master regulated his visit. The *restaurateur* of Ems, in collusion with the official agent of the Duke of Nassau, were fortunate this season in having the archduke knocked down to them.

"May I flatter myself that Miss Fane feels herself better?" asked the archduke.

"She certainly does feel herself much better, but my anxiety about her does not decrease. In her illness apparent convalescence is sometimes more fearful than actual suffering."

The archduke continued by the side of her ladyship for about twenty minutes, seizing every opportunity of uttering, in the most courtly tone, the most inane compliments; and then trusting that he might soon have her ladyship's opinion respecting the Austrian troop at the New House; and that Von Konigstein and his English friend would not delay letting him see them there, his imperial highness, followed by his silent suite, left the gardens.

"I am afraid, your ladyship must have almost mistaken me for a taciturn lord chamberlain," said the baron, occupying immediately the archduke's vacated side.

"Baron von Konigstein must be very changed, if silence be imputed to him as a fault," said Lady Madeleine, with rather a severe smile.

"Baron von Konigstein is very much changed since last he had the pleasure of conversing with Lady Madeleine Trevor; more changed than her ladyship will perhaps believe; more changed than he can sometimes himself believe; I hope, I flatter myself, I feel sure, that he will not be less acceptable to Lady Madeleine Trevor, because he is no longer rash, passionate, and unthinking; because he has learned to live more for others and less for himself."

"Baron von Konigstein does indeed appear changed; since, by his own account, he has become in a very few years, a being, in whose existence philosophers scarcely believe—a perfect man."

"My self-conceit has been so often reproved by your ladyship, that I will not apologize for a quality which I almost flattered myself I no longer possessed; but you will excuse, I am sure, one who, in zealous haste to prove himself amended, has, I fear, almost shown that he has deceived himself."

Some strange thoughts occurred to Vivian, whose eyes had never quitted her ladyship's face while this conversation was taking place. "Is this a woman to resent the neglect of an order for Eau de Cologne? my dear Von Konigstein, you're a very pleasant fellow, but this is not the way men apologize for a nonpurchase of a pocket handkerchief!"

"Has your ladyship been long at Ems?"

"Nearly a month; we are travelling in consequence of the ill-health of a relation. It was our intention to have gone to Pisa, but our physician, in consequence of the extreme heat of the summer, is afraid of the fatigue of travelling, and has recommended Ems. The air between these mountains is very soft and pure, and I have no reason to regret at present that we have not advanced farther on our journey."

"The lady who was with your party at dinner, I fear, your invalid. She certainly does not look like one. I think," said the baron, with an effort, "I think that her face is not unknown to me. It is difficult, even after so many years, to mistake Miss——"

"Fane—," said Lady Madeleine, very firmly; for it seemed that the baron required a little assistance at the end of his sentence.

"Ems," returned his excellency, with great rapidity of utterance,—"Ems is, indeed, a charming

face—at least to me. I have, within these few days, quite recurred to the feelings of my boyhood; nothing to me is more disgustingly wearisome than the gay bustle of a city. My present diplomatic appointment at Frankfort ensures a constant life among the most charming scenes of nature. Naples, which was offered to me, I refused. Eight years ago, I should have thought an appointment at Naples a paradise on earth."

"Your excellency must indeed be changed," remarked her ladyship.

"How beautiful is the vicinity of the Rhine! I have passed within these three days, for almost the twentieth time in my life, through the Rhine-pan; and yet how fresh, and lovely, and novel, seemed all its various beauties. My young traveling companion is very enthusiastic about this gem of Germany. He is one of your ladyship's countrymen. Might I take the liberty of introducing to you—Mr. Grey?"

Her ladyship, as if it could now no longer be postponed, introduced to the two gentlemen, her mother, Mr. St. George. This gentleman, who, during the whole previous conversation, had kept his head in a horizontal position, looking neither to the right, nor to the left, and apparently unconscious that any one was conversing with his sister, because, according to the English custom, he was not "introduced"—now suddenly turned round, and welcomed his acquaintance with great cordiality.

"Mr. Grey," asked her ladyship, "are you of Dorsetshire?"

"My mother is a Dorsetshire woman; her family name is Vivian, which name I also bear—Sir Hargrave Vivian, of Chester Grange."

"Have you a father living, may I ask?"

"At present in England."

"Then I think we are longer acquainted than I have been introduced. I met your father at Sir Hargrave Vivian's only last Christmas. Of course a father you must indeed be proud. He spoke you in those terms that make me congratulate myself that I have met the son. You have been long from England, I think?"

"Nearly a year and a half; and I only regret my absence from it, because it deprives me of the society of my parents."

The baron had resigned his place by Lady Madeleine, and was already in close conversation with Mr. St. George, from whose arm Lady Madeleine's was disengaged. No one acted the part of Asmodeus with greater spirit than his excellency; and the secret history of every person whose secret story could be amusing, delighted Mr. St. George. "There," said the baron, "goes the son of an unknown father; his mother followed the camp, and her offspring was early initiated in the mysteries of military petty larceny. As he grew up, he became the most skilful plunderer that ever rifled the dying of both sides. Before he was twenty, he followed the army as a petty chapman, and made an excellent fortune by re-acquiring, after battle, the very goods and trinkets which he had sold at an immense price before it. Such a wretch could do nothing but prosper, and in due time the lord's brat became a commissary-general. He made millions in a period of general starvation, he cleared at least a hundred thousand dollars, by belazzoning the shoe-leather during a retreat. He was a baron, covered with orders, and his daughter

was married to some of our first nobles. There goes a Polish count, who is one of the greatest gamblers in Christendom. In the same season he lost to a Russian general, at one game of chess, his chief castle, and sixteen thousand acres of woodland; and recovered himself on another game, on which he won of a Turkish pasha one hundred and eighty thousand leopard skins. The Turk, who was a man of strict honour, paid the count by embezzling the tribute in kind of the province he governed; and, as on quarter-day he could not, of course, make up his accounts with the Divan, he joined the Greeks."

While the baron was entertaining Mr. St. George, the conversation between Lady Madeleine and Vivian proceeded.

"Your father expressed great disappointment to me, at the impossibility of his paying you a visit, in consequence of your mother's illness. Do you not long to see him?"

"More, much more than I can express. Did your ladyship think my father in good spirits?"

"Generally so; as cheerful as all fathers can be without their only son," said her ladyship, smiling very kindly.

"Did he complain then of my absence?"

"He regretted it."

"I linger in Germany with the hope of seeing him; otherwise I should have now been much farther south. You will be glad to hear that my mother has quite recovered; at least my last letters inform me so. Did you find Sir Hargrave as amusing as ever?"

"When is the old gentleman otherwise than the most delightful of old men! Sir Hargrave is one of my greatest favourites. I should like to persuade you to return and see them all. Can't you fancy Chester Grange very beautiful now, Albert?" said her ladyship, turning to her brother, "what is the number of our apartments? Mr. Grey, the sun has now disappeared, and I fear the night air among these mountains. We have hardly yet summer nights, though we certainly have summer days. We shall be happy to see you at our rooms." So saying, bowing very cordially to Vivian, and less stiffly to the baron than she had done, Lady Madeleine left the garden.

"There goes the most delightful woman in the world," said the baron; "how fortunate that you know her! for really, as you might have observed, I have no great claims on her indulgent notice. I was certainly very wild in England; but then, young men, you know, Grey!—and I didn't leave a card, or call, before I went; and the English are very stiff and precise about those things; and the Trevors had been very kind to me. I think we'd better take a little coffee, now; and then, if you like, we'll just stroll into the Rénouarts."

In a brilliantly illuminated saloon, adorned with Corinthian columns, and casts from some of the most famous antique statues, assembled between nine and ten o'clock in the evening, many of the visitors at Ems. On each side of the room was placed a long, narrow table, one of which was covered with green baize, and unattended; while the variously-coloured leather surface of the other was very closely surrounded by an interested crowd. Behind this table stood two individuals of very different appearance. The first was a short, thick man, whose only business was dealing certain portions of playing-cards with quickness.

cession, one after the other; and as the fate of the table was decided by this process, did his companion, an extremely tall, thin man, throw various pieces of money upon certain stakes, which were deposited by the bystanders on different parts of the table; or, which was much oftener the case, with a silver rake with a long ebony handle, sweep into a large enclosure near him, the scattered sums. This enclosure was called the bank, and the mysterious ceremony in which these persons were assisting, was the celebrated game of rouge-et-noir. A deep silence was strictly preserved by those who immediately surrounded the table; no voice was heard, save that of the little, short, stout dealer; when, without an expression of the least interest, he seemed mechanically to announce the fate of the different colours. No other sound was heard, except the jingle of the dollars and Napoleons, and the ominous rake of the tall, thin banker. The countenances of those who were hazarding their money, were grave and gloomy: their eyes were fixed, their brows contracted, and their lips projected; and yet there was an evident effort visible, to show that they were both easy and unconcerned. Each player held in his hand a small piece of paste-board, on which, with a steel pricker, he marked the run of the cards, in order, from his observations, to regulate his own play:—the rouge-et-noir player imagines that chance is not capricious. Those who were not interested in the game, promenaded in two lines within the tables; or, seated in recesses between the pillars, formed small parties for conversation.

As Vivian and the baron entered, Lady Madeleine Trevor, leaning on the arm of an elderly man, left the room; but as she was in earnest conversation she did not observe them.

"I suppose we must throw away a dollar or two, Grey!" said the baron, as he walked up to the table.

"My dear De Konigstein—one pinch—one pinch!"

"Ah! *marquis*, what fortune to-night?"

"Bad—bad! I have lost my Napoleon: I never risk farther. There's that cursed crusty old De Trumpetson, persisting, as usual, in his run of bad luck; because he never will give in. Trust me, my dear De Konigstein, it'll end in his ruin; and then, if there's a sale of his effects, I shall, perhaps, get his snuff-box—a-a-h!"

"Come, Grey; shall I throw down a couple of Napoleons on joint account. I don't care much for play myself; but I suppose, at Ems, we must make up our minds to lose a few Louis. Here! now for the red—joint account, mind!"

"Done."

"There's the archduke! Let us go and make our bow; we needn't stick at the table as if our whole soul were staked with our crown pieces:—we'll make our bow, and then return in time to know our fate." So saying, the gentlemen walked up to the top of the room.

"Why, Grey!—Surely no—it cannot be—and yet it is. De Bœffleura, how d'ye do?" said the baron, with a face beaming with joy, and a hearty shake of the hand. "My dear, dear fellow, how the devil did you manage to get off so soon? I thought you were not to be here for a fortnight: we only arrived ourselves to-day."

"Yes—but I've made an arrangement which I did not anticipate; and so I posted after you im-

mediately. Whom do you think I have with me?"

"Who?"

"Salvinski."

"Ah! And the count?"

"Follows immediately. I expect him to or next day. Salvinski is talking to the au and see, he beckons to me. I suppose I s to be presented."

The chevalier moved forward, followed by baron and Vivian.

"Any friend of Prince Salvinski I shall have great pleasure in having presented Chevalier, I feel great pleasure in having presented to me. Chevalier, you ought to l of the name of Frenchman. Chevalier, th are a grand nation. Chevalier, I have th respect for the French nation."

"The most subtle diplomatist," thought as he recalled to mind his own intr "would be puzzled to decide to which im imperial highness leans."

The archduke now entered into con with the prince, and most of the circle v rounded him. As his highness was at Vivian, the baron let slip our hero's s seizing hold of the Chevalier de Bœffleura walking up and down the room with l was soon engaged in very animated conv In a few minutes, the archduke, bowin circle, made a move, and regained the s Saxon lady, from whose interesting con had been disturbed by the arrival of vinski—an individual of whose long st dull romances the archduke had, from ex a particular dread: but his highness wa very courteous to the Poles.

"Grey, I've despatched De Bœffleura to tl to instruct his servant and Ernstorff to de possible, in order that our rooms may be al You'll be delighted with De Bœffleura w know him, and I expect you to be great frie by-the-by, his unexpected arrival has qu us forget our venture at rouge-et-noir. C we're too late now for any thing; even il been fortunate, our doubled stake, remi the table, is, of course, lost: we may as w ever, walk up." So saying, the baron res table.

"That is your excellency's stake!—tha excellency's stake!" exclaimed many voic came up.

"What's the matter, my friends? wl matter?" asked the baron very calmly.

"There's been a run on the red! there's run on the red! and your excellency's s doubled each time. It has been 4—8—16—64—128—256—and now it's 512!" quitted a little thin man in spectacles, pointin same time to his unparalleled line of punctu was one of those officious, noisy little men, always ready to give you unasked inform every possible subject; and who are never s as when they are watching over the int some stranger, who never thanks them for necessary solicitude.

Vivian, in spite of his philosophy, felt th ment and wonder of the moment. He loo earnestly at the baron, whose countenanc ever, was perfectly unmoved.

said he, very coolly, "it seems we're in

ake's then not all your own?" very easily the little man in spectacles.

rt of it is yours, sir," answered the baron

ing to deal," said the short, thick man. Is the board cleared?"

excellency then allows the stake to required the tall thin banker, with affected ce.

tainly," said the baron, with real non-

—eight—fourteen—twenty-four—thirty—age 34—

wded nearer; the table was surrounded deep, for the wonderful run of luck had and nearly the whole room were round

Indeed, the archduke and Saxon lady, see the silent suite, were left alone at the of the room. The tall banker did not agitation. Even the short, stout dealer be a machine. All looked anxious exar-

ron. Vivian looked at the table; his watched, with a keen eye, the little lo one even breathed as the cards de—"Ten—twenty"—(Here the countenance rker brightened)—twenty-two—twenty-

ty-eight—thirty-one—Noir 31.—The ke: no more play to-night. The roulette s immediately."

of the great interest which had been ex-ly the whole crowd, without waiting to te the baron, rushed to the opposite side n in order to secure places at the roulette

ese five hundred and twelve Napoleons

," said the baron; "Grey, this is your

I congratulate you. With regard to the

Mr. Hermann, what bills have you

n Gogel's house of Frankfort,—accepted

—for two hundred and fifty each, and

re Napoleons will make it right," said the

, as he opened a large black pocket book,

h he took out two small bits of paper.

examined them, and after having seen

reed, put them calmly into his pocket,

ting the twelve Napoleons; and then

ian's arm, and regretting extremely that

ave the trouble of carrying such a weight,

Mr. Hermann a very good night and suc-

roulette, and walked with his companion

me. Thus passed a day at Ems!

CHAPTER VII.

following morning, Vivian met with his per George, behind a small stall in the

your highness, what do you wish? Here -cologne, violet soap, and watch ribands; -bottle of Ems crystal; a snuff-box of fig-. Name your price, name your price: trifle that can be given by a man who ank, must be more than my whole stock worth."

: not paid you yet, Eesper, for my glass here is your share of my winnings: the

fame of which, it seems, has reached even you!" added Vivian, with no pleased air.

"I thank your highness for the nap; but I hope I have not offended by alluding to a certain event which shall be passed over in silence," continued Eesper George, with a look of mock solemnity. "I really think your highness has but a faint appetite for good fortune. They deserve her most who value her least."

"Have you any patrons at Ems, Eesper, that have induced you to fix on this place in particular for your speculations. Here, I should think, you have many active rivals," said Vivian, looking round the various stalls.

"I have a patron here, may it please your highness, a patron who has never deceived, and who will never desert me,—I want no other;—and that's myself. Now here comes a party: could your highness just tell me the name of that tall lady now?"

"If I tell you it is Lady Madeleine Trevor, what will it profit you?"

Before Vivian could well finish his sentence, Eesper had drawn out a long horn from beneath his small counter, and sounded a blast which echoed through the arched passages. The attention of every one was excited, and no part of the following speech was lost.

"The celebrated Eesper George, fresh from Fairyland, dealer in pomatum and all sorts of perfumery, watches, crosses, Ems crystal, coloured prints, Dutch toys, Dresden china, Venetian chains, Neapolitan coral, French crackers, chamois bracelets, tame poodles, and Cherokee corkcrews, mender of mandolins and all other musical instruments, &c. &c. &c. to her royal highness, Lady Madeleine Trevor, and all her royal family, has just arrived at Ems, where he only intends to stay two or three days, and a few more weeks besides.—Now your ladyship, what do you wish?"

"Mr. Grey," said her ladyship, smiling, "you can perhaps explain the reason of this odd greeting. Who is this singular being?"

"The celebrated Eesper George, just"—again commenced the conjuror; but Vivian prevented the repetition.

"He's an old knave, Lady Madeleine, that I've met with before at other places. I believe I may add an honest one. What say you, Eesper?"

"More honest than moonlight, my lady, for that deceives every one; and less honest than self-praise, my lady, for that deceives no one."

"My friend, you have a ready wit."

"My wit is like a bustling servant, my lady; always ready when not wanted; and never present at a pinch."

"Come, I must have a pair of your chamois bracelets. How sell you them?"

"I sell nothing, my lady; all here is gratis to beauty, virtue, and nobility; and these are my only customers."

"Thanks will not supply a stock-in-trade, though, Eesper," said Vivian.

"Very true! your highness; but my customers are apt to leave some slight testimonies behind them of the obligations which they are under to me; and these, at the same time, are the prop of my estate, and the proof of their discretion. But who comes here?" said Eesper, drawing out his horn. The sight of this terrible instrument reminded Lady Madeleine how greatly the effect of music is weight-

ened by distance, and she made a speedy retreat. Her ladyship, with her companion, the elderly gentleman with whom she left the Redoute the preceding night, and Vivian, stopped one moment to watch the party to whom Esser George alluded. It was a family procession of a striking character.

Three daughters abreast, flanked by two elder sons formed the first file. The father, a portly, prosperous-looking man, followed with his lady on his arm. Then came two nursery maids, with three children, between the tender ages of five and six. The second division of the grand army, consisting of three younger sons, immediately followed. This was commanded by a tutor. A governess and two young daughters then advanced; and then came the extreme rear—the sutlers of the camp—in the persons of two footmen in rich laced liveries, who each bore a basket on his arm filled with various fancy articles which had been all purchased during the promenade of this nation through only part of the bazaar.

"Who can they be?" said her ladyship.

"English," said the elderly gentleman; who had been already introduced by Lady Madeleine to Vivian as her uncle, Mr. Sherborne.

The trumpet of Esser George produced a due effect upon the great party. The commander-in-chief stopped at his little stall, and, as if this were the signal for general attack and plunder, the files were all immediately broken up. Each individual dashed at his prey, and the only ones who struggled to maintain a semblance of discipline, were the nursery maids, the tutor, and the governess, who experienced the greatest difficulty in suppressing the early taste which the detachment of light infantry indicated for booty. But Esser George was in his element: he joked, he assisted, he exhibited, he explained: tapped the cheeks of the children, and complimented the elder ones; and, finally, having parted at a prodigious profit with nearly his whole stock, paid himself out of a large and heavy purse, which the portly father, in his utter inability to comprehend the complicated accounts and the debased currency, with great frankness deposited in the hands of the master of the stall, desiring him to settle his own claims.

"The tradesman is more singular even than his customers," said Mr. Sherborne; "I think you said you knew something of him, Mr. Grey!"

"I knew him, sir, before, as a conjuror at Frankfort fair."

"By a conjuror, do you mean, Mr. Grey, one of those persons who profess an ability to summon, by the adjuration in a sacred name, a departed spirit; or merely one, who, by his dexterity in the practice of sleight-of-hand, produces certain optical delusions on the sight and senses of his fellow-men?"

"I met Esser George certainly only in your latter capacity, Mr. Sherborne."

"Then, sir, I cannot agree with you in your definition of his character. I should rather style him a *juggler*, than a *conjuror*. Would you call that man a *conjuror* who plays a trick with a cup and balls, a sprinkling of rice, or a bad shilling?"

"You are, perhaps, sir, critically speaking, right; but the world in general are not such purists as Mr. Sherborne. I should not hesitate to describe Esser George as a *conjuror*. It is a use of the word which common parlance has sanctioned. We must always remember that custom is stronger than etymology."

"Sir, are you aware that you're giving loose very dangerous sentiments! I may be too precise I may be too particular; but sir, I read Addison and, sir, I think Pope a poet."

"Then, sir, I am happy to say that our two agree," said Vivian, bowing.

"I'm very happy to hear it—I'm very glad of it—sir, I congratulate you—give me your hand you're the first bearable young man that I've met with for these last twenty years. Sir, they sometimes talk of our laws and constitution being danger, which is seldom true—how is it that no one calls out that our language is in danger? A no poet, whom I honour for his defence of Pope, a who, in my opinion, has gained more glory by a letter of his, than by all the rhapsodies of false liancy, bad taste, and exaggerated feeling, who ever claimed the attention of the world under the title of Eastern Tales, has called this the *Alex Bronze*—why didn't he call it the *Alex Slane*?"

"But, my dear uncle," said Lady Madeleine "now that you and Mr. Grey understand each other, you surely will not maintain that his use of the word *conjuror* was erroneous. Custom sure has some influence upon language. You would think me very affected, I'm sure, if I were to talk putting on a *neck-kerchief*."

"My dear, Mr. Grey was right, and I was wrong I carried the point a little too far; but I feel it my duty to take every opportunity of informing the youth of the present day that I hold them in absolute contempt. Their affectation, their heartlessness, their artificial feelings, their want of all real genuine, gentlemanly, English sentiments—above all, their slang—have disgusted me—I'm very glad to find that Mr. Grey is not guilty of these follies. I'm very glad to find that he believes that a man older than himself is not quite a fool—I wish I could say as much for Albert. Mr. Grey was certainly right—next to being correct, a man should study to be candid—I haven't met with a candid man these fifty years—no one now will own, by any chance, they're ever wrong. Now, for myself, it's very odd, I never form a lasting opinion, and yet I'm not always right: but I always own it—I make it the principle of my life to be candid."

"I hope I may be allowed to ask after Miss Fane, although I have not the honour of her acquaintance."

"She continues much better; my uncle and myself are now about to join her in the Lime-walk, where, by this time, she and Albert must have arrived; if you are not otherwise engaged, and will join our morning stroll, it will give us much pleasure."

Nothing in the world could give Vivian greater pleasure; he felt himself irresistibly impelled to the side of Lady Madeleine; and only regretted his acquaintance with the baron, because he felt conscious that there was some secret cause, which prevented that intimacy from existing between his excellency and the Trevor party, which his amazing talents and his influential rank would otherwise have easily produced. When they reached the Lime-walk, Miss Fane and her cousin were not there, although the time of appointment was considerably past.

"I hope nothing has happened," said Lady Madeleine; "I trust she is not taken unwell."

"Quite improbable!" said Mr. Sherborne.

must be some other reason: if she were the servant would have been here."

"us return," said Lady Madeleine. "no means, my dear," said Mr. Sherborne, "the greatest affection for his nieces; "Mr. ill. I have no doubt, have the goodness to with your ladyship, and I will fetch Violet; it depend upon it, *she* is ready to come;"

ig, Mr. Sherborne stalked off at a very quick dear uncle is rather a character, Mr. Grey; is as remarkable for his excellence of heart, y little peculiarities in his habits. I am glad y have made a favourable impression upon ecause, as I hope you will be much in his y, you stand now no chance of being in- in the list of young men whom he delights ent, at the head of which, I regret to say, is ther. By-the-by, I do not know whether I : allowed to congratulate you upon your t success at the Redoute last night. It is te that all have not to regret your arrival at much as poor Mr. Hermann."

e run of fortune was certainly most extra- y. I'm only sorry that the goddess should owered her favours on one who neither s nor desires them; for I've no wish to be nd as I never lost by her caprices, it is fair that I should gain by them."

u do not play then, much?" ever played in my life, till last night. Gamb- is never been one of my follies: although alogue of errors is fuller, perhaps, than most

hink Baron von Konigstein was your part- the exploit."

: was; and apparently as little pleased at e as myself."

lead!—"Have you known the baron long?" u will be surprised to hear that we are only of a week. I have been living, ever since n Germany, a most retired life. A circum- of a most painful nature drove me from id—a circumstance of which, I can hardly nyself, and can hardly wish, that your lady- ould be ignorant."

m not unacquainted, Mr. Grey," said Lady ine, much moved, "with an unhappy event, we need not again mention. Believe me, earned the sad history from one, who, while e the rigid truth, spoke of the living sufferer s of the fondest affection."

father!" said Vivian, with an agitation which not affect to suppress, "a father can hardly ected to be impartial."

ch a father as yours must always be so. He of those men who must be silent, or speak

I only wish that he was with us now, to e in bringing about what he must greatly -your return to England."

cannot be—it cannot be—I look back to the r which I spent in that country with feel- such disgust, I look forward to a return to untry with feelings of such repugnance—

ut I feel I'm trespassing beyond all bounds, ling on these subjects to your ladyship.

re those on which I have never yet con- with human being; but the unexpected meet- th a friend—with a friend of my father, I has surprised me into a display of feelings I thought were dead within me; and for

which, I am sure, the custom of society requires an apology."

"O! do not say so, Mr. Grey—do not say so! When I promised your father, that in case we met, I should even seek your society, I entered into an engagement, which, though I am surprised I am now called upon to fulfil, I did not form in a care- less spirit. Let us understand each other: I am inclined to be your friend, if you will permit it; and the object which I wish to obtain by our friend- ship, I have not concealed: at least, I am frank. I have suffered too much myself, not to understand how dangerous, and how deceitful is the excess of grief. You have allowed yourself to be overcome by that which Providence intended as a lesson of instruction—not as a sentence of despair. In your solitude you have increased the shadow of those fantasies of a heated brain, which converse with the pure sunshine of the world would have enabled you to dispel."

"The pure sunshine of the world, Lady Made- leine!—would that it had never lighted me! My youth flourished in the unwholesome sultriness of a blighted atmosphere, which I mistook for the resplendent brilliancy of a summer day. How deceived I was, you may judge, not certainly from finding me here; but I am *here*, because I have ceased to suffer, only in having ceased to hope."

"You have ceased to hope, Mr. Grey, because hope and consolation are not the visible companions of solitude, which are of a darker nature. Hope and consolation spring from those social affections, which your father, among others, has taught me to believe imperishable. With such a parent, are you justified in acting the part of a misanthrope? Ought you not rather to hope, to believe that there are others, whose principle of being is as benevo- lent, if not as beneficial as his own?"

"Lady Madeleine, I do believe it; if I had doubted it, my doubts must end this day; but you mistake in believing that I am a misanthrope. It is not sorrow now that makes me sad; but thought that has made me grave. I have done with grief; but my release from suffering has been gained at a high price. The ransom which freed me from the slavery of sorrow was—HAPPINESS."

"I am no metaphysician, Mr. Grey, but I fear you have embraced a dark philosophy. Converse with the world, now that your passions are subdued, and your mind matured, will do more for you than all the arguments of philosophers. I hope yet to find you a believer in the existence of that good which we all worship, and all pursue. Happiness comes when we least expect it, and to those who strive least to obtain it—as you were fortunate yester- day at the Redoute, when you played without any idea of winning. The truth seems, that after all, we are the authors of our own sorrow. In an eager pursuit to be happy, and to be rich, men do many unwise, and some unprincipled actions; it ends in their becoming miserable, and continuing poor. The common course of events will bring to each mortal his fair share of fortune. The whole secret of life seems to be to restrain our passions, and let the common course of events have its run. But I will not enter into an argument which I have not the vanity to suppose that I possess the ability to maintain; and yet which I feel that I ought not to have the weakness to lose. But here comes my uncle, and Violet too! Well, my dear sir, you've brought the truant, I see!"

"Brought her, indeed, dear little thing! I knew it was not her fault; I said she was not unwell; I wonder what St. George will do next! Mr. Grey, this is my niece Violet, Miss Fane: and Violet, my dear, this is Mr. Grey, and I wish all persons of his age were like him. As for the Honourable Mr. St. George, he gets more unbearable every day. I suppose soon he'll 'cut' his own family."

"Well, I regret, uncle, that I think in this business you are entirely wrong," said Miss Fane.

"Now, Violet! now how can you be so wilful! to contradict me so, when you have not a shadow of a defence for your cousin's unprincipled conduct!"

"My dear uncle, is it so unprincipled to break an appointment? I think it is one of the most agreeable and pleasant habits in the world. No young man is expected to keep an appointment."

"Now Violet! how can you go on so? You know if there's one thing in the world that I detest more than another, it is breaking an appointment—a vice, which, as far as I can observe, has originated in your *young men* of the present day. And who the devil are these young men, that the whole system of civilized society is to be disorganized for their convenience? *Young men*, indeed! I hate the phrase. I wish I could hear of more *young gentlemen*, and fewer *young men*. There isn't a young man in the world for whom I haven't the most sovereign contempt; I don't mean you, Mr. Grey. I've the highest respect for you. I mean that mass of half-educated, inexperienced, insolent, conceited puppies, who think every man's a fool who's older than themselves; whose manners are a mixture of the vices of all nations, and whose talk is the language of none; at the head of whom is my nephew—your brother, Lady Madeleine Trevor—your cousin, Violet Fane—I mean Mr. Albert St. George."

Mr. Sherborne had now worked himself into a terrible passion; and the two ladies increased his irritability, by their incessant laughter.

"Well, I confess I do not see that Albert deserves this tirade," continued Miss Fane; "only think, my dear uncle, how many unexpected demands a man has upon his time. For all we know, unforeseen business may have peremptorily required Albert's attention. How do you know that he hasn't been looking at a horse for a friend; or completing the purchase of a monkey; or making some discoveries in the highest branches of experimental philosophy? perhaps he *has* succeeded in lighting his cigar with a burning glass."

"Miss Fane!"

"Mr. Sherborne!"

"If I were here alone, if Lady Madeleine were only here, I could excuse this; but how you are to answer to your conscience giving a stranger, Mr. Grey, a young gentleman for whom I have the highest respect, the impression that you, my niece, can tolerate for a moment, the existence of such monstrous absurdities is to me the most unaccountable thing that——"

"My dear uncle! how do you know that Mr. Grey has not got a monkey himself? You really should remember who is present, when you are delivering these philippics on the manners of the *present century*, and be cautious, lest, at the same time, you are not only violent but personal."

"Now, Violet, my dear!"

"My dear sir!" said Lady Madeleine, "Violet

is exerting herself too much; you know you are an enchanted lady at present, and may neither laugh, speak, nor sing."

"Well then, dear uncle, let us talk no more of poor Albert's want of memory. Had he come, I should very likely have been unwell, and then he would have stayed at home the whole morning for no earthly good. As it is, here I am; with the prospect of a very pleasant walk, not only feeling quite well, but decidedly better every day,—so now let us make an apology to Mr. Grey, for having kept him so long standing."

"Violet, you're an angel! though I'm your uncle, who says so;—and perhaps, after all, as it wasn't a positive appointment, St. George is not so much to blame. And I will say this for him, that with all his faults, he is on the whole very respectful to me, and I sometimes try him hard. I'm not in the habit of making hasty observations, but if ever I find myself doing so, I'm always ready to own it. There's no excuse, however, for his not fetching you, my dear!—what business had he to be going about with that Baron von Konigstein—that foreign——"

"Friend of Mr. Grey's, my dear uncle," said Lady Madeleine.

"Humph!"

As Mr. Sherborne mentioned the baron's name, the smiling face of Lady Madeleine Trevor became clouded, but the emotion was visible only for a moment, as the soft shadow steals over the sunny wood. Miss Fane led on her uncle, as if she were desirous to put an end to the conversation.

"You would scarcely imagine, Mr. Grey, from my cousin's appearance, and high spirits, that we are travelling for her health; nor do her physicians, indeed, give us any cause for serious uneasiness—yet I confess, that at times, I cannot help feeling very great anxiety. Her flushed cheek, and the alarming languor which constantly succeeds any exertion or excitement, make me fear that her complaint is more deeply seated than they are willing to acknowledge."

"Let us hope that the extraordinary heat of the weather may account, in a great degree, for this distressing languor."

"We are willing to adopt any reasoning that gives us hope, but I cannot help remembering that her mother died of consumption."

"Oh! Lady Madeleine," said Miss Fane, looking back, "do not you think I'm strong enough to walk as far as the New Spring? My uncle says, he is sure that I should be much better if I took more exercise, and I really want to see it. Can't we go to-morrow? I dare say, as Albert played truant to-day, he will condescend to escort us."

"Condescend, indeed! when I was a young man——"

"You a young man! I don't believe you ever were a young man," said Miss Fane, putting her small hand before a large open mouth, which was about to deliver the usual discourse on the degeneracy of the "present day."

The walk was most agreeable; and, with the exception of one argument upon the principles of the picturesque, which Mr. Sherborne insisted upon Vivian's entering into, and in which, of course, that gentleman soon had the pleasure of proving himself candid, by confessing himself confuted, it passed over without any disturbance from that most worthy and etymological individual

first day for nearly a year and a half, Grey had joined with beings whose virtues he respected, in calm and rati- fication; this was nearly the first day that Vivian Grey had conversed with a female, with no sinister view of self-ad- vantage and self-interest. He found his con- ceit of his character, changed;—treating her than men; of nature, rather than of art; there was no false brilliancy to un- wary; no splendid paradoxes to amuse the weak; no poignant scandal to amuse the vain; he conversed calmly, without eager- ness, without passion; and delivering with a conscientious opinion upon subjects un- derstudied, and which he understood, at while he interested others, he had erected himself.

CHAPTER VIII.

The walking party returned home, they and of idle domestics assembled oppo- site, round a group of equipages, con- veyed two enormous crimson carriages, and a large caravan, on all which vehi- cles a coat of arms was most ostentatiously

displayed at arrival!" said Miss Fane. "It was the singular party that we watched in the bazaar," said Lady Madeleine. "I've such a curious character to in- troduce, a particular friend of Mr. Grey's, very much to have the honour of your acquaintance," Mr. ESSPER GEORGE. "An odd name! Is he an English-

man? His appearance is still more singular than his name. I shall see him to-morrow." "His carriages, then, belong to him?" "Certainly," said Vivian.

At five o'clock, the party again met at dinner. By the joint exertions of Ernstorff, George's servants, the baron, Vivian, valier de Bœffleurs, were now seated at the party of Lady Madeleine Trevor. The guests fortunately arrived from Frankfort, said the baron. "Mr. St. George has been taking a ride very far up the Rhine, your ladyship yet been to the Castle?"

"I cannot say we have not. The execution of one of those plans, often arranged, has been executed."

"I should go by all means; it was one of the best spots: I took Mr. St. George there yesterday. The ruin is one of the finest in the world, as your ladyship is well aware, of ruins. An expedition to Nassau would be a capital foundation for a pic-nic. Miss Fane, a beautiful valley which was visited by a knight, in the middle ages, followed by a stag—how exquisitely romantic! Vivian vouches for his sweet seclusion. I imagine the wooded mountains, the river, the sound of the unseen river! I should we want, except agreeable music, and the best provisions, to be in Paradise!"

"You certainly give a most glowing description," said Miss Fane. "Why, Mr. Grey, this lovely valley would be a model for the solitude we were planning this morning. I almost wish that your excellency's plan were practicable."

"I take the whole arrangement upon myself; there is not a difficulty. The ladies shall go on donkeys, or we might make a water excursion of it part of the way, and the donkeys can meet us at the pass near Stein, and then the gentlemen may walk; and if you fear the water at night, which is, perhaps, dangerous, why then the carriages may come round: and if your own be too heavy for mountain roads, my britchka is always at your command. You see there is not a difficulty."

"Not a difficulty," said Mr. St. George: "Madeleine, we only wait for your consent."

"Which will not be withheld a minute, Albert; but I think we had better put off the execution of our plan till June is a little more advanced. I must have a fine summer night for Violet."

"Well, then, I hold the whole party present, engaged to follow my standard whenever I have permission from the high authority to unfold it," said the baron, bowing to Lady Madeleine: "and at least, on cool reflection, I shall not possess influence enough to procure the appointment, I shall, like a skilful orator, take advantage of your feelings, which gratitude for this excellent plan must have already enlisted in my favour, and propose myself as master of the ceremonies." The baron's eye caught Lady Madeleine's as he uttered this, and something like a smile, rather of pity than derision, lighted up her face.

Here Vivian turned round to give some directions to an attendant, and to his horror, found Essper George standing behind his chair.

"Is there any thing your highness wants?"

Essper was always particularly neat in his appearance, but to-day the display of clean linen was quite ostentatious; and to make the exposure still more terrific, he had, for the purpose of varying his costume, turned his huzzar-jacket inside-out, and now appeared in a red coat, lined with green.

"Who ordered you here, sir?"

"My duty."

"In what capacity do you attend?"

"As your highness' servant."

"I insist upon your leaving the room directly."

Here Essper looked very suppliant, and began to pant like a hunted hare.

"Ah! my friend, Essper George," said Lady Madeleine, "are you there? What's the matter, is any one ill-treating you?"

"This then is Essper George!" said Violet Fane, "what kind of creature can he possibly be? Why, Mr. Grey, what's the matter?"

"I'm merely discharging a servant, at a moment's warning, Miss Fane; and if you wish to engage his constant attendance upon yourself, I have no objection to give him a character for the occasion."

"What do you want, Essper?" said Miss Fane.

"I merely wanted to see whether your walk this morning had done your highness' appetite any good," answered Essper, looking very disconsolate; "and so I thought I might make myself useful at the same time; and though I don't bring in the soup in a cocked hat, and carve the venison with

a *couteau-de-chasse*," continued he, howing very low to Ernstorff, who, standing stiff behind his master's chair, seemed utterly unaware that any person in the room could experience a necessity; "still I can change a plate, or hand the wine, without cracking the first, or drinking the second."

"And very good qualities too!" said Miss Fane. "Come, Essper, you shall put your accomplishments into practice immediately, so change my plate."

This Essper did with the greatest dexterity and quiet, displaying at the same time a small white hand, on the back of which was marked a comet and three daggers. As he had the discretion not to open his mouth, and performed all his duties with great skill, his intrusion in a few minutes was not only pardoned but forgotten.

"There has been a great addition to the visitors to-day, I see," said Lady Madeleine: "pray, who are the new-comers?"

"English," said the chevalier, who, seated at a considerable distance from her ladyship, had not spoken a word during the whole dinner.

"I'll tell you all about them," said the baron. "This family is one of those, whose existence astounds the Continent much more than any of your mighty dukes and earls, whose fortunes, though colossal, can be conceived; and whose rank is understood. Mr. Fitzloom is a very different personage; for, thirty years ago he was a journeyman cotton-spinner: some miraculous invention in machinery entitled him to a patent, which has made him one of the most important landed proprietors in Great Britain. He has lately been returned a member for a great manufacturing city; and he intends to get over the two first years of his parliamentary career, by successively monopolizing the accommodation of all the principal cities of France, Germany, Switzerland, and Italy; and by raising the prices of provisions and post-horses through a track of five thousand miles. My information is authentic, for I had a casual acquaintance with him in England. There was some talk of a contract for supplying our army from England, and I saw Fitzloom often on the subject; I have spoken to him to-day. This is by no means the first of the species that we have had in Germany. I can assure you, that the plain traveller feels seriously the inconvenience of following such a caravan. Their money flows with such unwise prodigality, that real liberality ceases to be valued; and many of your nobility have complained to me, that, in their travels, they are now often expostulated with, on account of their parsimony, and taunted with the mistaken extravagance of a stocking-maker, or a porter-brewer."

"What pleasure can such people find in travelling?" wondered the honourable and aristocratic Mr. St. George.

"As much pleasure, and more profit, than half the young men of the present day. In my time, travelling was undertaken on a very different system to what it is now. The English youth then travelled to frequent what Lord Bacon says are 'especially to be seen and observed—the courts of princes.' You all travel now, it appears, to look at mountains, and catch cold in spouting trash on lakes by moonlight. You all think you know every thing, none of you know any thing."

"But, my dear sir!" said the baron, "although I willingly grant you, that one of the great advan-

tages of travel is the opportunity which it affords us of becoming acquainted with human nature in all its varieties, as developed by different climates, different customs, different governments, and consequently of becoming enabled to form an opinion as to the general capabilities of men; and which knowledge is, of course, chiefly gained where human beings most congregate—great cities, and as you say, the courts of princes: still, sir, we must also not the less forget, that one of the great benefits of travel is, that it enlarges a man's experience not only of his fellow-creatures in particular, but of nature in general. And this not merely by enabling him to see a quantity and a variety of landscape, but by permitting him to watch nature at various times and seasons. Many men pass through life without seeing a sunrise: a traveller cannot. If human experience be gained by seeing men in their undress, not only when they are conscious of the presence of others; natural experience is only to be acquired by studying nature at all periods, not merely when man is busy and beasts asleep."

"But what's the use of this deep experience of nature? Men are born to converse with men, not with stocks and stones. He who has studied *Le Sage*, will be more happy and more successful in this world, than the man who muses over *Rousseau*."

"There I agree with you, Mr. Sherborne, I have no wish to make man an anchorite. But as to the utility, the benefit of a thorough experience of nature, it appears to me to be evident. It increases our stock of ideas—"

"So does every thing."

"But it does more than this, sir. It calls into being new emotions, it gives rise to new and beautiful associations; it creates that salutary state of mental excitement which renders our ideas more lucid, our conceptions more vivid, and our conclusions more sound. Can we ~~too~~ much esteem a study which, at the same time, renders our imagination more active, and our judgment more correct?"

"Well, sir, there may be something in what you say, but not much."

"But, my dear sir," said Lady Madeleine, "if his excellency will allow me to support an argument, which in his hands can require no assistance, do not you think that a full communion with nature is calculated to elevate our souls, and purify our passions, to—"

"So is reading your Bible, my dear. A man's soul should always be elevated; and his passions would then require little purification. If they are not, he might look at mountains forever, but I should not trust him a jot more."

"But, sir," continued the baron, with unusual warmth; "I am clear that there are cases in which the influence of nature has worked what you profess to treat as an impossibility, or a miracle. I am myself acquainted with an instance of a very peculiar character. A few years ago, a gentleman of high rank found himself exposed to the unhappy suspicion of being connected with some disgraceful and dishonourable transactions, which took place in the highest circles of England. Unable to find any specific charge which he could meet, he added one to the numerous catalogue of those unfortunate beings who have sunk in society, the victims of a surmise. He quitted Eng-

and disgusted with the world, became the state which he had been falsely believed to be. The house of Cardinal, at Naples, used even in that city for its midnight orgies, not only for its bacchanal revels, this gentleman became a constant guest. He entered with eagerness into every species of dissipation, though none gave him pleasure; and his fortune, wealth, and the powers of his mind, were all unavailing. One night, one horrible night of dissipation, a mock election of master of the house was proposed, and the hero of my tale had the splendid gratification of being chosen by unanimous consent to his new office. About two days of the same night, he left the palace of the king, with an intention of returning. His way of return led by the Chiaja, which you, Mr. Grey, who have been in Naples, perhaps remember. It was one of those nights which we only find in the South. The blue and brilliant sky was sleeping beneath a cloudless sky; and the stars not only shed their light over the orange and olive trees, which, springing from their green foliage of myrtle, hung over the water, but added lustre to the white domes, and glittering spires of the city; and flooded Vesuvius and the coast with light, as far even as Capua. The hero of whom I am speaking, had passed this night in many nights when the moon was not less bright, the waves not less silent, and the orange not less sweet; but to-night—to-night something irresistible impelled him to stop. What a contrast to the artificial light, and heat, and splendour of the palace to which he was returning. He stood in silence. Would it not be wiser to forget the world's injustice, in gazing on a moonlit sea, than in discovering in the illuminated halls of the palace, the baseness of the crowd which forms the world's power? To enjoy the refreshing effect of a fanning breeze which now arose, he turned and gazed on the other side of the bay. His right hand stretched out the promontory of Capri; there were the shores of Baia. But he did not only the loveliness of the land which overcame his spirit: he thought of those whose hands had made us forget even the beauty of these scenes, in associations of a higher character, and an exalted nature. He remembered the time when it was his only wish to be numbered among

How had his early hopes been fulfilled! How just account had he rendered to himself and country—that country that had expected so much—that self that had aspired even to more!

He broke over the city, and found him still gazing down the Chiaja. He did not return to the cardinal's palace; and in two days he had left Naples. I can myself, from personal experience, attest that this individual is now a useful and valuable member of society. The world speaks of him in more flattering terms."

The baron spoke with great energy and animation. Violet Fane, who had been very silent, and certainly had not encouraged, by any apparent interest, the previous conversation of the baron, added to this anecdote with the most eager attention; but the effect it produced upon Lady Madeleine Trevor was most remarkable. At one moment Vivian thought that her ladyship would faint.

"Well!" said Mr. Sherborne, who first broke in, "I suppose you think I'm wrong: I should

like to hear your opinion, Mr. Grey, of this business. What do you think of the question?"

"Yes, pray give us your opinion, Mr. Grey," said Lady Madeleine with eagerness; as if she thought that conversation would give her relief. The expression of her countenance did not escape Vivian.

"I must side against you, Mr. Sherborne," said he; "his excellency, has, I think, made out his point. It appears to me, however, that there is one great argument in favour of the study of nature, and, indeed, of travelling, which I think I have never seen used. It matures a man's mind, because it teaches him to distrust his judgment. He who finds that his preconceptions of natural appearances are erroneous, will in time suspect that his opinions of human nature may be equally incorrect: in short, that his moral conceptions may be as erroneous as his material ones."

"Well, I suppose I must give up. It's very odd, I never form a hasty opinion, and yet I'm sometimes wrong. Never above owning it, though—never above owning it—not like the young men of the present day, who are so confidently addicted to every species of error, that, for my own part, whenever they seem to suspect that they're wrong, I am always sure that they're right."

Here the party broke up. The promenade followed—the archduke—his compliments—and courtiers—then came the Redoute. Mr. Hermann bowed low as the gentlemen walked up to the table. The baron whispered Vivian that it was "expected" that they should play, and give the tables a chance of winning back their money. Vivian staked with the carelessness of one who wishes to lose. As is generally the case under such circumstances, he again left the Redoute a most considerable winner. He parted with the baron at his excellency's door, and proceeded to the next, which was his own. Here he stumbled over something at the door-way, which appeared like a large bundle. He bent down with his light to examine it, and found Essper George, lying on his back, with his eyes half-open. It was some moments before Vivian perceived he was asleep; stepping gently over him, he entered his apartment.

CHAPTER IX.

WHEN Vivian rose in the morning, a gentle tap at his door announced the presence of an early visitor, who being desired to enter, appeared in the person of Essper George.

"Does your highness want any thing?" asked Essper, with a very submissive air.

Vivian stared at him for a moment, and then ordered him to come in.

"I had forgotten, Essper, until this moment, that on returning to my room last night, I found you sleeping at my door. This also reminds me of your conduct in the saloon yesterday; and as I wish to prevent the repetition of such improprieties, I shall take this opportunity of informing you once for all, that if you do not in future conduct yourself with more discretion, I must apply to the Maitre d'Hotel. Now, sir, what do you want?"

Essper was silent, and stood with his hands

crossed on his breast, and his eyes fixed on the ground.

"If you do not want any thing, quit the room immediately."

Here the singular being began to weep and sob most bitterly.

"Poor fellow!" thought Vivian, "I fear with all thy wit, and pleasantry, and powers, thou art, after all, but one of those capricious, which nature sometimes indulges in; merely to show how superior is her accustomed order to eccentricities, even accompanied with the rarest and most extraordinary powers."

"What is your wish, Essper?" continued Vivian, in a kinder tone. "If there be any service, any real service, that I can do you, you will not find me backward. Are you in trouble? you surely are not in want?"

"No, no, no!" sobbed Essper; "I wish to be—to be your highness's servant," here he hid his face in his hands.

"My servant! why, surely, if, as I have reason to suppose, you can maintain yourself with ease by your exertions, it is not very wise conduct, voluntarily to seek out a dependence on any man. I'm afraid that you've been keeping company too much with the set of lazy, indolent, and insolent lacqueys, that are always loitering about these bathing places. Ernstorff's green livery and sword, have they not turned your brain, Essper?—how is it? tell me."

"No, no, no! but I want to be your highness's servant, only your highness's servant, I am tired of living alone."

"But, Essper, remember, that to gain a situation as a servant, you must be a person of regular habits and certain reputation. I have myself a very good opinion of you, but I have myself seen very little of you, though more than any one here; and I am a person of a peculiar turn of mind. Perhaps there is not another individual in this house, who would even allude to the possibility of engaging a servant without a character."

"Does the ship ask the wind for a character, when he bears her over the sea without hire, and without reward? and shall your highness require a character from me, when I request to serve you without wages, and without pay?"

"Such an engagement, Essper, it would be impossible for me to enter into, even if I had need of your services, which at present I have not. But I tell you, frankly, that I see no chance of your suiting me. I should require an attendant of steady habits and experience; not one whose very appearance would attract attention when I wished to be unobserved, and acquire a notoriety for the master which he detests. There is little likelihood of my requiring any one's services, and with every desire to assist you, I warmly advise you to give up all idea of entering into a state of life, for which you are not the least suited. If, on consideration, you still retain your wish of becoming a servant, and remain at the Baths with the expectation of finding a master, I recommend you to assume, at least for the moment, a semblance of regularity of habits. I have spoken to a great many ladies here, about your chamois bracelets, for which I think you will find a great demand. Believe me, your stall will be a better friend than your master. Now leave me."

Essper remained one moment with his eyes still

fixed on the ground; then walking very rapidly up to Vivian, he dropped on his knee, kissed his hand, and disappeared.

Mr. St. George breakfasted with the baron, and the gentlemen called on Lady Madeleine early in the morning to propose a drive to Stein Castle; but her ladyship excused herself, and Vivian following her example, the baron and Mr. St. George "patronised" the Fitzlooms, because there was nothing else to do. Vivian again joined the ladies in their morning walk; but Violet Fane was not in her usual high spirits—she complained more than once of her cousin's absence, and this, connected with some other circumstances, gave Vivian the first impression that her feelings towards Mr. St. George were not merely those of a relation. As to the Chevalier de Bœffleurs, Vivian soon found that it was utterly impossible to be on intimate terms with a being without an idea. The chevalier was certainly not a very fit representative of the gay, gallant, mercurial Frenchman: he rose very late, and employed the whole of the morning in reading the French newspapers, and playing billiards alternately with Prince Salvinski, and Count von Alsburch.

These gentlemen, as well as the baron, Vivian, and Mr. St. George, were to dine this day at the New House.

They found assembled, at the appointed hour, a party of about thirty individuals. The dinner was sumptuous, the wines superb. At the end of the banquet, the company adjourned to another room, where play was proposed, and immediately commenced. His imperial highness did not join in the game; but, seated in a corner of the apartment, was surrounded by five or six side-camps, whose only business was to bring their master constant accounts of the fortunes of the table, and the fate of the bets. His highness did not stake.

Vivian soon found that the game was played on a very different scale at the New House to what it was at the Redoute. He spoke most decidedly to the baron of his detestation of gambling, and expressed his unwillingness to play; but his excellency, although he agreed with him in his sentiments, advised him to conform for the evening to the universal custom. As he could afford to lose, he consented, and staked boldly. This night very considerable sums were lost and won; but none returned home greater winners than Mr. St. George and Vivian Grey.

CHAPTER X.

THE first few days of an acquaintance with a new scene of life, and with new characters, generally appear to pass very slowly; not certainly from the weariness which they induce, but rather from the keen attention which every little circumstance commands. When the novelty has worn off, when we have discovered that the new characters differ little from all others we have met before, and that the scene they inhabit is only another variety of the great order we have so often observed, we relapse into our ancient habits of inattention; we think more of ourselves, and less of those we meet; and musing our moments away,

very, or in a vain attempt to cheat the coming of the monotony of the present one, we begin to find that the various-vested hours have bounded, are bounding away in a course at once imperious, uninteresting, and unprofitable. Then it was that terrified at our nearer approach to the river, whose dark windings it seems the business of all to forget, we start from our stupor to find over the rapidity of that collective sum of time, every individual hour of which we have been execrated for its sluggishness.

Vivian had now been three weeks at Ems, and the presence of Lady Madeleine Trevor and her alone induced him to remain. Whatever the mystery existing between her ladyship and the baron, and that there was some mystery Vivian

was not for a moment doubt, his excellency's desire to attach himself to her party had been successful. The great intimacy subsisting between the baron and her ladyship's brother materially aided in bringing about this result. For the fortnight, the baron was Lady Madeleine's constant attendant in the evening promenade, and in the morning walk; and though there were few persons whose companionship could be added to that of Baron von Konigstein, still he sometimes regretted that his friend and sister George had not continued their morning

The presence of his excellency seemed to have an unfavourable influence upon the spirits of Violet Fane, and the absurd and intense jealousy of Mr. St. George, prevented him from finding, in her agreeable conversation, consolation for the loss of the sole enjoyment of Lady Madeleine's exhilarating presence. Mr. St. George had never met Vivian's advances with alacrity, and he now treated him with studied

caution. The visits of the gentlemen to the New House were seen frequent. The saloon of the archduke was open every evening, and in spite of his great desire for the fatal amusement which was there habitually pursued, Vivian found it utterly impossible to decline frequently attending, without betraying his motives to painful misconception. Fortunately, his extraordinary fortune did not diminish, and rendered his attendance still more a

The baron was not so successful as on his evening's venture at the Redoute; but Mr. St. George's star remained favourable. Of Esperge, Vivian had seen little. In passing through the casino one morning, which he seldom did, he fell to his surprise that the former conjuror had lost his quaint costume, and was now attired in the usual garb of men of his condition of life. As Mr. St. George was busily employed at the moment, he did not stop to speak to him; but he returned a most respectful bow. Once or twice, also, he met Esperge in the baron's apartments; and seemed to have become a very great favourite of the servants of his excellency and the Chevalier de Bœffleurs, particularly with his former valet, to whom he now behaved with the most deference.

For the first fortnight, the baron's attendance on Lady Madeleine was constant. It was this time that his excellency began to slacken his attentions. He first disappeared from the morning walks, and yet he did not ride; he then desisted from joining the party at Lady Madeleine's apartments in the evening, and never omitted

increasing the circle at the New House for a single night. The whole of the fourth week the baron dined with his imperial highness. Although the invitation had been extended to all the gentlemen from the first, it had been agreed that it was not to be accepted, in order that the ladies should not find their party in the *salon* less numerous or less agreeable. The baron was the first to break through a rule which he had himself proposed; and Mr. St. George and the Chevalier de Bœffleurs soon followed his example.

"Mr. Grey," said Lady Madeleine one evening, as she was about to leave the gardens, "we shall be happy to see you to-night, if you are not engaged.—Mr. Sherborne only will be with us."

"I thank your ladyship, but I fear that I am engaged," said Vivian; for the receipt of some letters from England made him little inclined to enter into society.

"O, no! you can't be engaged," said Violet Fane; "pray come! pray come! I know you only want to go to that terrible New House; I wonder what St. George can find to amuse him there so keenly! I fear no good: men never congregate together for any beneficial purpose. I am sure, with all his gastronomical affectations, he would not, if all were right, prefer the most *exquisit* dinner in the world to our society. As it is, we scarcely see him a moment. I think, Mr. Grey, that you are the only one who has not deserted the *salon*. For once, give up the New House—I'm sure you are not in your usual spirits; you will be more amused, more innocently amused at least, even if you go to sleep like Mr. Sherborne, than you will with playing at that disgusting *rouge-et-noir*, with a crowd of suspicious-looking men in mustachios."

Vivian smiled at Miss Fane's warmth, and was too flattered by the interest which she seemed to take in his welfare, to persist in his refusal, although she did dilate most provokingly on the absence of her cousin. Vivian soon joined them.

"Lady Madeleine is assisting me in a most important work, Mr. Grey. I am making drawings of the whole valley of the Rhine; I know that you are very accurately acquainted with the scenery; you can, perhaps, assist me with your advice about this view of Old Hatto's Castle; I am sure I'm not quite right."

Vivian was so completely master of every spot in the Rhine-land, that he had no difficulty in suggesting the necessary alterations. The drawings, unlike most young ladies' sketches, were vivid representations of the scenery which they professed to depict; and Vivian forgot his melancholy as he attracted the attention of the fair artist to points of interest, unknown or unnoticed by the Guide-books and the Diaries.

"You must look forward to Italy with great interest, Miss Fane!"

"The greatest! I shall not, however, forget the Rhine, even among the Apennines."

"Our intended fellow-travellers, Lord Mounteney and his family, are already at Milan," said Lady Madeleine to Vivian; "we were to have joined their party.—Lady Mounteney is a Trevor."

"I have had the pleasure of meeting Lord Mounteney in England, at Sir Berdmore Scrope's: do you know him?"

"Very slightly. The Mounteneys pass

winter at Rome, where I hope we shall join them. Do you know the family intimately?"

"Mr. Ernest Clay, a nephew of his lordship's, I have seen a great deal of; I suppose, according to the adopted phraseology, I ought to describe him as my friend, although I am utterly ignorant where he is at present; and, although, unless he is himself extremely altered, there scarcely can be two persons who now more differ in their pursuits and tempers than ourselves."

"Ernest Clay! is he a friend of yours?—He's somewhere on the Continent now; I forget where; with some diplomatic appointment, I think. Indeed, I'm sure of the fact, although I'm perfectly ignorant of the place, for it was through Mr. Trevor's interest that he obtained it. I see you smile at the idea of Ernest Clay drawing up a protocol!"

"Lady Madeleine, you have never read me Caroline Mounteney's letter, as you promised," said Miss Fane; "I suppose full of raptures—'the Alps, and Apennines, the Pyrenean, and the river Po.'"

"By no means: the whole letter of four sides, double crossed, is filled with an account of the ballet at La Scala; which, according to Caroline, is a thousand times more interesting than Mont Blanc, or the Simplon."

"One of the immortal works of Vignano, I suppose," said Vivian; "he has raised the ballet of action to an equality with tragedy. I have heard my father mention the splendid effect of his *Vestale* and his *Othello*."

"And yet," said Violet Fane, "I do not like *Othello* to be profaned. It is not for operas and ballets. We require the thrilling words."

"It is very true; yet Pasta's acting in the opera, and in an opera acting is only a secondary point, was a grand performance; and I have myself seldom witnessed a more masterly effect produced by any actor in the world, than I did a fortnight ago, at the opera at Darmstadt, by Wild in *Othello*."

"I think the history of *Deedemona* is the most affecting of all tales," said Miss Fane.

"The violent death of a woman, young, lovely, and innocent, is assuredly the most terrible of tragedies," observed Vivian; "and yet, I know not why, I agree with you that *Deedemona*'s is the most affecting of fates—more affecting than those of *Cordelia*, or *Juliet*, or *Ophelia*."

"It is," said Lady Madeleine, "because we always contrast her misery with her previous happiness. The young daughter of Lear is the child of misfortune: *Juliet* has the anticipation, not the possession of happiness; and the characters in *Hamlet* seem so completely the sport of a mysterious but inexorable destiny, that human interest ceases for those whose conduct does not appear to be influenced by human passions. The exquisite poetry—the miraculous philosophy of *Hamlet*, will always make us read it with delight, study it with advantage; but for *Ophelia* we do not mourn. We are interested in the fortunes of a fictitious character, because in witnessing a representation of a scene of human life, we form our opinion of the proper course to be pursued by the imaginary agents; and our attention is excited, in order to ascertain whether their conduct and our opinions agree. But where the decree of fate is visibly being fulfilled, or the interference of a supernatural power is revealed, we know that human faculties can no

longer be of avail; that prudence can no longer protect—courage no longer defend. We witness the tragedy with fear, but not with sympathy."

"I have often asked myself," said Miss Fane, "which is the most terrible destiny for a young woman to endure:—to meet death after a life of trouble, anxiety, and suffering; or suddenly to be cut off in the enjoyment of all things that make life delightful; with a heart too pure to be tainted by their possession, and a mind too much cultivated to over-appreciate their value?"

"For my part," said Vivian, "in the last instance, I think that death can scarcely be considered an evil. The pure spirit would only have to sleep until the Great Day; and then—as Dryden has magnificently said, 'wake an angel still.' How infinitely is such a destiny to be preferred to that long apprenticeship of sorrow and suffering, at the end of which men are generally as unwilling to die as at the commencement!"

"And yet," said Miss Fane, "there is something fearful in the idea of sudden death."

"Very fearful!" muttered Vivian: "very fearful in some cases;" for he thought of one whom he had sent to his great account before his time.

"Violet, my dear!" said Lady Madeleine, in a very agitated voice; "have you finished your drawing of the *Bingenloch*?" But Miss Fane would not leave the subject.

"Very fearful in all cases, Mr. Grey. How few of us are prepared to leave this world without warning! And if from youth, or sex, or natural disposition, or from the fortunate union of the influence of all these three, a few may chance to be better fitted for the great change than their companions, still, I always think that in those cases in which we view our fellow-creatures suddenly departing from this world, apparently without a bodily or mental pang, there must be a moment of suffering which none of us can understand; suffering occasioned by a consciousness of immediately meeting death in the very flush of life and earthly thoughts—a moment of suffering, which, from its intense and novel character, may appear an eternity of anguish. I shall, perhaps, not succeed in conveying my peculiar feelings on this subject to you. I have always looked upon such an end as the most terrible of dispensations."

"I enter into your feelings," answered Vivian; "although the light in which you view this subject is new to me. Terrible, however, as we may universally consider the event of a sudden death, I still do not believe that a long and painful illness ever exempts man from the suffering which you mention; but that he always quits life with the same unwillingness to die."

"I cannot agree with you, Mr. Grey, in this opinion, which you seem to entertain of the inefficacy of a long apprenticeship of sorrow and suffering." From my own experience, I should say that it robbed death of all its terrors. Death is most dreadful at a distance—illness weakens the mind in a wise proportion with the body; and therefore, at a certain period the feelings are less enervated by debility, or too blunted by personal suffering, to experience that which in health appears the greatest trial in our dissolution—the parting with our friends. In the enjoyment of every pleasure which health and affluence can afford, I confess that it appears most dreadful to encounter the agonies of disease; and parox-

all we love here, to sink into the grave and forgotten by those of whose every thought, a living, we seemed to be the centre. But as we are worn out with pain, the selfishness of nature makes us look upon those around with little more interest than as ministers of wants. We forget all but the present suffering, and only look forward to the future as a release from it. If ever you have experienced a long dangerous illness, Mr. Grey, I am confident on reflection, you will agree with me."

"My dear Violet," said Lady Madeleine; "I ought that Mr. Grey came here to-night to forget melancholy. These surely are subjects which not make men gay."

"I assure you, Lady Madeleine," said Vivian, "at I take great—the greatest interest in this subject. I have endured a most dangerous illness, Miss Fane, but it was not one of the kind you allude to. It was a violent fever, and I was not sensible of my disease till its danger was past. I have no very clear conception of my state of mind when I recovered; but I think, if I remember right, I dreaded life as much as I feared death."

"That was a peculiar case," said Miss Fane; "case in which death, from the state of mind, I have had no terrors. Of course my argument refers to the generality of long and dangerous illnesses, when the patient is only too sensible of his daily increasing debility. For myself, I distinctly remember being reduced to such fearful weakness, that the physicians and nurses round my bed believed me dying, if not dead; and from complete inanition, entirely past a knowledge of what was going on around me. They were deceived, however, in this. I heard them say that I was dying; more than once they thought that I was dead; but it produced no emotion in my mind, either fear, nor sorrow, nor hope. I felt my heart fluttering fainter and fainter. I could not move even my finger; and I thought, indeed, that I could soon be over; but it brought no pang for sufferers who surrounded my bed, no anxiety for myself. At last I sunk into a deep sleep; and after a length of time I awoke with renewed feelings. My natural affections returned then I had a strong longing for life. Here I am now, enjoying excellent health, in spite of the fearful physician's grave looks," said Miss Fane, "holding her arm round Lady Madeleine's neck; I do not only health, but every blessing which heaven can give me. Nevertheless, dreading death, I do now, with the feelings of health and a new life, I sometimes almost regret that I ever came from that perfect calm of every earthly joy."

"Vivian was thinking that Violet Fane was most beautiful creature he had ever beheld," said Lady Madeleine Trevor bent down, and kissed her forehead. Her ladyship's large blue eyes were filled with tears. A woman's eye never seems more truthful than when it glances through a tear—as the of a star seems more brilliant when sparkling with a wave.

"Violet, my dear," said her ladyship, "let us go no more of death."

"Who was talking of death?" said Mr. Sherborne, waking from a refreshing nap; "I'm sure I don't. Let me see—I forget what my last obser-

vation was; I think I was saying, Lady Madeleine, that a little music would refresh us all. Violet, my dear, will you play me one of my favourites?"

"What shall it be, dear sir? I really think I may sing to-night. What think you, Lady Madeleine? I have been silent a fortnight." So saying, Miss Fane sat down to the piano.

Mr. Sherborne's favourite ensued. It was a lively air, calculated to drive away all melancholy feelings, and cherishing those bright sunny views of human life which the excellent old man had invariably professed. But Rosina's muse did not smile to-night upon her who invoked its gay spirit; and ere Lady Madeleine could interfere, Violet Fane had found more congenial emotions in one of Weber's prophetic symphonies.

O! MUSIC! miraculous art, that makes the poet's skill a jest; revealing to the soul inexpressible feelings, by the aid of inexplicable sounds! A blast of thy trumpet, and millions rush forward to die; a peal of thy organ, and uncourted nations sink down to pray. Mighty is thy three-fold power!

First, thou canst call up all elemental sounds, and scenes, and subjects, with the definiteness of reality. Strike the lyre! Lo! the voice of the winds—the flash of the lightning—the swell of the wave—the solitude of the valley!

Then thou canst speak to the secrets of a man's heart as if by inspiration. Strike the lyre! Lo!—our early love—our treasured hate—our withered joy—our flattering hope!

And, lastly, by thy mysterious melodies, thou canst recall man from all thought of this world and of himself—bringing back to his soul's memory, dark but delightful recollections of the glorious heritage which he has lost, but which he may win again. Strike the lyre! Lo! paradise, with its palaces of inconceivable splendour, and its gates of unimaginable glory!

When Vivian left the apartment of Lady Madeleine, he felt no inclination to sleep; and instead of retiring to rest, he bent his steps towards the gardens. It was a rich summer night; the air, recovered from the sun's scorching rays, was cool—not chilling. The moon was still behind the mountains; but the dark blue heavens were studded with innumerable stars, whose tremulous light quivered on the face of the river. All human sounds had ceased to agitate; and the note of the nightingale, and the rush of the waters, banished monotony without disturbing reflection. But not for reflection had Vivian Grey deserted his chamber: his heart was full—but of indefinable sensations; and forgetting the world in the intensity of his emotions, he felt too much to think.

How long he had been pacing by the side of the river he knew not, when he was awakened from his reverie by the sound of voices. He looked up, and saw lights moving at a distance. The party at the New House had just broke up. He stopped beneath a branching elm-tree for a moment, that the sound of his steps might not attract their attention; and at this very instant the garden gate opened, and closed with great violence. The figure of a man approached. As he passed Vivian, the moon rose up from above the brow of the mountain, and lit up the countenance of the baron. Despair was stamped on his distracted features.

CHAPTER XI.

When Vivian awoke in the morning, he found that the intenseness of his emotions had subsided; and that his sensations were not quite so indefinite as on the preceding night:—he found himself in love—with whom, however, was perhaps still doubtful. The image of Violet Fane had made his dreams delicious; but it must be confessed, that the eidolon sometimes smiled with the features of Lady Madeleine Trevor:—but that he looked on the world with new feelings, and a changed spirit,—with hope, and almost with joy,—was certain. The sweet summer morning had succeeded to the soft summer night. The sun illumined as yet only the tops of the western mountains; and the morning breeze, unheated by his beams, told that it was June by the odours which it wafted around. At such a moment the sense of existence alone is happiness; but to Vivian it seemed that the sun was about to light up a happier world, and that the sweet wind blew from Paradise.

Young love! young love, "thy birth was of the womb of morning dew, and thy conception of the 'youthful prime!'"—so Spenser sings; and there are few, perhaps, who, on this subject, have not scribbled some stray stanzas in their time, if not as sweet, it may be more sincere. They will understand feelings which none can describe. How miraculous is that power, which, in an instant, can give hope to the desperate, and joy to the forlorn; which, without an argument, can vanquish all philosophy; and without a gibe silence all wit; which turns the lighthearted serious, while it makes the sorrowful smile; which is braver than courage and yet more cautious than fear; which can make the fool outwit wisdom, and wisdom envy the fool!

It was in one of those sweet bowers, with which, as we have before mentioned, the gardens of Ems wisely abound, that Vivian Grey had spent more than three hours, unconscious of the passing of a moment. A rustling among the trees first attracted his attention; and on looking quickly up the winding walk, he thought he saw Essper George vanish in the shrubbery. Was he watched!—But he soon forgot his slight anger in another fit of abstraction, from which he was awakened, as he imagined by the same sound. "This time, I'll catch you," thought Vivian. He jumped suddenly up, and nearly knocked down Lady Madeleine Trevor, who had entered the arbour.

"I hope I've not disturbed you, Mr. Grey," said her ladyship, who saw that he was confused; "I am in want of an escort, and I have come to reclaim a truant knight. You forget that I had your pledge yesterday, to accompany me to the New Spring."

Vivian made a violent struggle to recover himself, and began to talk a quantity of nonsense to her ladyship, by way of apology for his negligence, and thanks for her kindness; Lady Madeleine listened, with her usual gentle smile, to a long and muttered discourse, in which the words "Essper George, Miss Fane, and fine morning," were alone intelligible.

"Shall we have the pleasure of Miss Fane and Mr. Sherborne's company in our walk to-day?" asked Vivian.

"No! they are not going with us," said Lady Madeleine. "You will join our party at the archduke's to-night, I hope, Mr. Grey," continued her ladyship.

"Yes—I don't know:—that is, are you going, Lady Madeleine?"

"Why, my dear sir, isn't this the fête night?"

"Ah! ah! I understand—I remember—it will give me the greatest pleasure to join the party at your ladyship's rooms."

Lady Madeleine looked very earnestly at her companion, and then talked about the weather, and the beauty of summer, and the singing of birds, and a thousand other little topics, by which she soon restored him to his usual state of mind. In a quarter of an hour Vivian had quite recovered his senses, and only regretted the part which he necessarily took in the conversation, because it prevented him from listening to the soft tones of her ladyship's voice, who, he thought, to-day looked a thousand times more beautiful than ever. He began also to think, that he should like to walk to the New Spring alone with her every morning of his life.

Vivian had been so occupied by his own feelings, that he and his companion had completed nearly half their walk, before it struck him that something was dwelling on the mind of Lady Madeleine. In the midst of the gayest conversation, her features more than once appeared to be in little accordance with the subject of discussion; and her voice often broke off abruptly at the commencement of a sentence—some sentence which it seemed she had not courage to finish.

"Mr. Grey," said her ladyship, suddenly; "I cannot conceal any longer, that I am thinking of a very different subject to the archduke's ball. As you form part of my thoughts at this moment, I shall not hesitate to disburthen my mind to you; although, perhaps, I run the risk of being considered at the same time both impertinent and officious. Understand me, however, distinctly, that whatever I may say, you are not, for a moment, to believe that I am ostentatiously presuming to give you advice. There are many points, however, to which the hint or intimation of a friend may attract our attention with advantage; and although our conversation to-day may not be productive of any to you, believe me that I should very much grieve, if my gentle suggestion were construed into an unwarrantable interference."

"Any thing that Lady Madeleine Trevor can do, surely cannot be construed by any one as unwarrantable—any thing that Lady Madeleine Trevor can be kind enough to address to me, must always be received with the most respectful, the most grateful attention."

"I wish not to keep you in suspense, Mr. Grey. It is of the mode of life which I see my brother, which I see you pursuing here, that I wish to speak," said her ladyship, with an agitated voice. "May I—may I really speak with freedom?"

"Any thing—every thing, with the most perfect unreserve and confidence," answered Vivian.

"You are aware, Mr. Grey, that Ems is not the first place at which I have met Baron von Kottstein."

"I am not ignorant that his excellency has been in England."

"It cannot have escaped you, Mr. Grey, that I acknowledge his acquaintance with reluctance."

"I should judge, with the greatest reluctance, Lady Madeleine."

"And yet it was with still more reluctance, Mr. Grey, that I prevailed upon myself to believe you

were his friend. I experienced the greatest delight, when you told me how short and accidental had been your acquaintance. I have experienced the greatest pain in witnessing to what that acquaintance has led; and it is with extreme sorrow, for my own weakness, in not having had courage to speak to you before, and with a hope of yet benefiting you, that I have been induced to speak to you now."

"Lady Madeleine, I trust there is no cause either for your sorrow or your fear; but much, much cause for my gratitude. Do not fear to be explicit."

"Now that I have prevailed upon myself to speak, Mr. Grey, and have experienced from you the reception that I gave you credit for; do not fear that there will be any want of openness on my part. I have observed the constant attendance of yourself, and my brother, at the New House, with the greatest anxiety. I have seen too much of the world, not to be perfectly aware of the danger—the terrific danger, which young men and young men of honour must always experience at such places. Alas! I have seen too much of Baron von Konigstein, not to know that at such places especially, his acquaintance is fatal. The evident depression of your spirits yesterday, determined me on a step which I have for the last few days been considering. Your abstraction this morning frightened me. I can learn nothing from my brother. I fear that I am even now too late; but I trust that whatever may be your situation, you will remember, Mr. Grey, that you have friends; that you will decide on nothing rash."

"Lady Madeleine," said Vivian, "I have too much respect for your feelings to stop even one moment to express the gratitude—the pride—the honourable pride, which your generous conduct allows me to feel. This moment repays me for a year of agony. I affect not to misunderstand one syllable of your meaning. My opinion, my detestation of the gaming-table has always, and must always be the same. I do assure you this, and all things, upon my honour. Far from being involved, my cheek burns while I confess, that I am master of a considerable sum—a most considerable sum, acquired by this unhalloved practice. But for this I am scarcely to be blamed. You are yourself aware of the singular fortune which awaited my first evening at Ems; that fortune was continued at the New House, the very first day I dined with his highness, and when, unexpectedly, I was forced to play; that fatal fortune has rendered my attendance at the New House absolutely necessary. I found that it was impossible to keep away, without subjecting myself to the most painful observations. I need scarcely say now, that my depression of yesterday was occasioned by the receipt of letters from England; and as to my abstraction this morning, believe me, Lady Madeleine, it was not a state of mind which grew out of any disgust to the world, or its inhabitants. I am ashamed of having spoken so much about myself, and so little about those for whom you are more interested. As far as I can judge, you have no cause, at present, for any serious uneasiness with regard to Mr. St. George. You may, perhaps, have observed that we are not very intimate, and therefore I cannot speak with any precision as to the state of his fortunes; but I have reason to believe that they are by no means unfavourable. And now for the baron, Lady Madeleine."

"Yes, yes!"

"I hardly know what I am to infer from your observations respecting him. I certainly should infer something extremely bad, were not I conscious, that, after the experience of five weeks, I, for one, have nothing to complain of him. The baron, certainly, is fond of play—plays high, indeed. He has not had equal fortune at the New House as at the Redoute; at least I imagine so, for he has given me no cause to believe, in any way, that he is a loser; and I need not tell Lady Madeleine Trevor, that at the table of an archduke, losses are instantly paid."

"Now that I know the truth—the joyful truth, Mr. Grey," said her ladyship, with great earnestness and animation; "I feel quite ashamed of my boldness; must I say my suspicions? But if you could only understand the relief, the ease, the happiness, that I feel at this moment, I am sure you would not wonder that I prevailed upon myself to speak to you. It may still be in my power, however, to prevent evil."

"Yes—yes, certainly! After what has passed, I would, without any fear of my motives being misinterpreted, submit to your ladyship, that the wisest course now, would be to speak to me frankly respecting Von Konigstein; and if you are aware of any thing which has passed in the circles in England, of a nature which may render it more prudent for—"

"O! stop, stop!" said Lady Madeleine, in the greatest agitation. Vivian was silent, and many minutes elapsed before his companion again spoke. When she did, her eyes were fixed on the ground, and her tones were low; but her voice was calm, and steady. It was evident that she had mastered her emotion.

"I am going to accept, Mr. Grey, the confidence which you have proffered me. I feel, I am convinced, that it is due to you now, that I should say all; but I do not affect to conceal that I speak, even now, with reluctance—an effort, and it will soon be over. It is for the best." Lady Madeleine paused one moment, and then resumed with a firm voice:—

"Upwards of six years, Mr. Grey, have now passed since Baron von Konigstein was appointed minister to London, from the court of ——. Although apparently young for such an important mission, he had already eminently distinguished himself as a diplomatist; and with all the advantages of brilliant talents, various accomplishments, rank, reputation, person, and a fascinating address, I need not tell you, that he immediately became of consideration, even in the highest circles. Mr. Trevor—I was then just married—was at this period high in office, and was constantly in personal communication with the baron. They became intimate, and his excellency our constant guest. The baron had the reputation of being a man of pleasure. Few men ever existed, for whose indiscretions there could be greater excuse; nor had any thing ever transpired which could induce us to believe, that Baron von Konigstein could be guilty of any thing, but an indiscretion. At this period a relation, and former ward of Mr. Trevor's, a young man of considerable fortune, and one whom we all most fondly loved, resided in our family. Trevor and myself considered him as our brother. With this individual, Baron von Konigstein formed a strong friendship; they were

seldom apart. Our relation was not exempted from the failings of all young men. He led a very dissipated, an alarmingly dissipated life; but he was very young; and as, unlike most relations, we never allowed any conduct on his part for an instant to banish him from our society; we trusted that the contrast which his own family afforded to his usual companions, would in time render his tastes more refined, and his habits less irregular. We had now known Baron Konigstein for upwards of a year and a half, most intimately. Nothing had transpired during this period to induce Mr. Trevor to alter the opinion which he had entertained of him from the first; he believed him to be a man of the purest honour, and, in spite of a few imprudences, of the correctest principles. Whatever might have been my own opinion of his excellency at this period, I had no reason to doubt the natural goodness of his disposition; and though I could not hope that he was one who would assist us in our plans for the reformation of Augustus, I still rejoiced to observe, that in the baron he would at least find a companion very different from the unprincipled and selfish beings by whom he was too often surrounded. Something occurred at this time, Mr. Grey, which it is necessary for me only to allude to; but which placed Baron von Konigstein, according to his own declaration, under the most lasting obligations to myself. In the warmth of his heart he asked if there was any real, and important service which he could do me. I took advantage of the moment to speak to him about our young friend; I detailed to him all our anxieties; he anticipated all my wishes, and promised to watch over him; to be his guardian; his friend—his real friend. Mr. Grey," continued her ladyship, "I struggle to restrain my feelings; but the recollections of this period of my life are so painful, that for a moment I must stop to recover myself."

For a few minutes they walked on in silence; Vivian did not speak, his heart was too full; and when her ladyship resumed her tale, he, unconsciously, pressed her arm.

"Mr. Grey, I study to be brief. About three months after the baron had given me the pledge which I mentioned, Mr. Trevor was called up at an early hour one morning with the alarming intelligence, that his late ward was supposed to be at the point of death at a neighbouring hotel. He instantly accompanied the messenger, and on the way the fatal truth was broken to him—our young friend had committed suicide! He had been playing all night with one whom I cannot now name." Here Lady Madeleine's voice died away, but with a struggle she again spoke firmly.

"I mean, Mr. Grey—with the baron—some foreigners also, and an Englishman—all intimate friends of Von Konigstein, and scarcely known to Captain —, I mean the deceased. Our friend had been the only sufferer; he had lost his whole fortune, and more than his fortune: and with a heart full of despair and remorse, had, with his own hand terminated his unhappy life. The whole circumstances were so suspicious, that public attention was keenly attracted, and Mr. Trevor spared no exertion to bring the offenders to punishment. The baron had the *hardihood* to call upon us the next day; admission was, of course, refused. He wrote the most violent letters, protesting by all that was sacred that *he was innocent*; that he was asleep during most

of the night, and accusing the others who were present of a conspiracy. The unhappy business now attracted universal attention. Its consequence on me was an alarming illness of a most unfortunate kind; I was therefore prevented from interfering, or, indeed, knowing any thing that took place; but Trevor informed me that the baron was involved in a correspondence in the public prints; that the accused parties recriminated, and that finally he was convinced that Von Konigstein, if there were any difference, was, if possible, the most guilty. However this might be, he soon obtained his recall from his own government. He wrote to myself and to Trevor before he left England; but I was too ill to hear of his letters, until Mr. Trevor informed me that he had returned them unopened. And now, Mr. Grey, I am determined to give utterance to that which as yet has always died upon my lips—the victim—the unhappy victim, was the brother of Miss Fane!"

"O, God!"

"And, Mr. St. George," continued Vivian, "Mr. St. George knowing all this, which surely he must have done; how came he to tolerate for an instant the advances of such a man?"

"My brother," said Lady Madeleine, "is a very good, and a very excellent young man, with a kind heart and warm feelings; but my brother has not much knowledge of the world, and he is too honourable himself ever to believe that what he calls a gentleman can be dishonest. My brother was not in England when the unhappy event took place, and of course the various circumstances have not made the same impression upon him as upon us. He has heard of the affair only from me; and young men, Mr. Grey, young men too often imagine that women are apt to exaggerate in matters of this nature, which, of course, few of us can understand. Von Konigstein had not the good feeling, or perhaps had not the power, connected as he was with the archduke, to affect ignorance of our former acquaintance, or to avoid a second one. I was obliged formally to introduce him to my brother. I was quite perplexed how to act. I thought of writing to Von Konigstein the next morning, a letter—a calm letter; impressing upon him, without the expression of any hostile feeling, the utter impossibility of the acquaintance being renewed: but this proceeding involved a thousand difficulties. How was a man of his distinction—a man, who not only from his rank, but from his disposition, is always a remarkable, and a remarked character, wherever he may be,—how could he account to the archduke, and to his numerous friends, for his not associating with a party with whom he was perpetually in contact. Explanations—painful explanations, and worse, much worse than these must have been the consequence. I could hardly expect him to leave Ems; it was, perhaps, out of his power: and for Miss Fane to leave Ems at this moment, was most strenuously prohibited by our physician. While I was doubtful and deliberating, the conduct of Von Konigstein himself prevented me from taking any step whatever. Feeling all the awkwardness of his situation, he seized with eagerness the opportunity of becoming intimate with a member of the family whom he had not before known. His amusing conversation and insinuating address immediately enlisted the feelings of my brother in his favour. You know yourself that the very morning after

their introduction they were riding together. As they became more intimate, the baron boldly spoke to St. George, in confidence, of his acquaintance with us in England, and of the unhappy circumstances which led to its termination. St. George was deceived by this seeming courage and candour. He has become the baron's friend, and has adopted his version of the unhappy story: and as the baron has had too much delicacy to allude to the affair in defence of himself to me, he calculated that the representations of St. George, who, he was conscious, would not preserve the confidence which Von Konigstein has always intended him to betray, would assist in producing in my mind an impression in his favour. The Neapolitan story which he told the other day at dinner, was of himself; relating it, as he might with truth, of a gentleman of rank, who was obliged to leave England, he blinded all present except Miss Fane and myself. I confess to you, Mr. Grey, that though I have not for a moment doubted the guilt of the baron, still I was weak enough to consider that his desire to become reconciled to me was at least an evidence of a repentant heart; and the Neapolitan story deceived me. Women are so easily to be deceived. We always hail with such credulous pleasure the prospect of the amendment of a fellow-creature. Actuated by these feelings, and acting as I thought wisest under existing circumstances, I ceased to discourage the attentions of the baron to myself and my friends. Your acquaintance, which we all desired to cultivate, was another reason for enduring his presence. His subsequent conduct has undeceived me: I am convinced now, not only of his former guilt, but also that he is not changed, and that with his accustomed talent, he has been acting a part which for some reason or other he has no longer any object in maintaining. Both Mr. Sherborne and myself have remonstrated with my brother; but the only consequence of our interference has been, that he has quarrelled with his uncle, and treated both my own and Miss Fane's interposition with indifference or irritability."

"And Miss Fane," said Vivian, "she must know all!"

"She knows nothing in detail; she was so young at the time, that we had no difficulty in keeping the particular circumstances of her brother's death, and the sensation which it excited, a secret from her. As she grew up, I have thought it proper that the mode of his death should no longer be concealed from her; and she has learned from some incautious observations of St. George's, enough to make her look upon the baron with horror. It is for Violet," continued Lady Madeleine, "that I have the severest apprehensions. For the last fortnight her anxiety for her cousin has produced an excitation of mind, which I look upon with more dread than any thing that can happen to her. She has entreated both Mr. Sherborne and myself, to speak to St. George, and also to you, Mr. Grey; and since our unsuccessful interference with my brother, we have been obliged to have recourse to deceit to calm her mind, and banish her apprehensions. Mr. Sherborne has persuaded her, that at the New House play is seldom pursued; and when pursued, that the limit is very moderate. The last few days she has become more easy and serene. She accompanies us to-night; the weather is so beautiful that the night air is scarcely to

be feared: and a gay scene well I am convinced, have a favourable influence upon her spirits. Your depression last night did not however escape her notice. Once more let me say how I rejoice at hearing what you have told me. I have such confidence in your honour, Mr. Grey, that I unhesitatingly believe all that you have said. I have such confidence in your sense and courage, Mr. Grey, that I have now no apprehensions for the future. For God's sake, watch St. George. I have no fear for yourself."

Here they had reached home: Vivian parted with her ladyship at the door of her apartments, and pressed her hand as he refused to come in. He hastened to the solitude of his own chamber. His whole frame was in a tumult; he paced up and down his room with wild steps; he pressed his hand to his eyes to banish the disturbing light; and tried to call up the image of her who was lately speaking—of her, for whom alone he now felt that he must live. But what chance had he of ever gaining this glorious creature? what right? what claims? His brow alternately burnt with maddening despair, and exciting hope. How he cursed himself for his foul sacrifice of his talents! those talents, the proper exercise, the wise administration of which might have placed happiness in his power,—the enjoyment of a state of feeling, whose existence he had once ridiculed, because his imperfect moral sense was incapable of comprehending it,—once, and once only, it darted across his mind, that feelings of mere friendship could not have dictated this confidence, and occasioned this anxiety on her part; but the soft thought dwelt on his soul only for an instant—as the shadow of a nightingale flits over the moonlit moss.

CHAPTER XII.

THE company at the archduke's fete was *most select*; that is to say, it consisted of every single person who was then at the Baths: those who had been presented to his highness having the privilege of introducing any number of their friends; and those who had no friend to introduce them, purchasing tickets at an enormous price from Cracowsky—the wily Polish intendant. The entertainment was most imperial; no expense and no exertion were spared to make the hired lodging-house look like an hereditary palace; and for a week previous to the great evening, the whole of the neighbouring town of Wisbaden, the little capital of the duchy, had been put under contribution. What a harvest for Cracowsky!—What a commission from the *restaurateur* for supplying the refreshments!—What a per centage on hired mirrors and dingy hangings!

The archduke, covered with orders, received every one with the greatest condescension, and made to each of his guests a most flattering speech. His suit, in new uniforms, simultaneously bowed directly the flattering speech was finished.

"Madame von Furstenburg, I feel the greatest pleasure in seeing you. My greatest pleasure is to be surrounded by my friends. Madame von Furstenburg, I trust that your amiable and delightful family are quite well. [The party passed on.] Cravatscheff!" continued his highness, inclining

his head round to one of his aid-de-camps, "Cravatscheff! a very fine woman is Madame von Furstenburg. There are few women whom I more admire than Madame von Furstenburg."

"Prince Salvinski, I feel the greatest pleasure in seeing you. My greatest pleasure is to be surrounded by my friends. Poland honours no one more than Prince Salvinski. Cravatscheff! a remarkable bore is Prince Salvinski. There are few men of whom I have a greater terror than Prince Salvinski."

"Baron von Konigstein, I feel the greatest pleasure in seeing you. My greatest pleasure is to be surrounded by my friends. Baron von Konigstein, I have not yet forgotten the story of the fair Venetian. Cravatscheff! an uncommonly pleasant fellow is Baron von Konigstein. There are few men whose company I more enjoy than Baron von Konigstein's."

"Count von Altenburgh, I feel the greatest pleasure in seeing you. My greatest pleasure is to be surrounded by my friends. You will not forget to give me your opinion of my Austrian troop. Cravatscheff! a very good billiard player is Count von Altenburgh. There are few men whose play I'd sooner bet upon than Count von Altenburgh's."

"Lady Madeleine Trevor, I feel the greatest pleasure in seeing you. My greatest pleasure is to be surrounded by my friends. Miss Fane, your servant—Mr. Sherborne—Mr. St. George—Mr. Grey. Cravatscheff! a most splendid woman is Lady Madeleine Trevor. There is no woman whom I more admire than Lady Madeleine Trevor; and Cravatscheff! Miss Fane, too! a remarkably fine girl is Miss Fane."

The great saloon of the New House afforded excellent accommodation for the dancers. It opened on the gardens, which, though not very large, were tastefully laid out; and were this evening brilliantly illuminated with coloured lamps. In the smaller saloon, the Austrian troop amused those who were not fascinated by waltz or quadrille, with acting proverbs: the regular dramatic performance was thought too heavy a business for the evening. There was sufficient amusement for all; and those who did not dance, and to whom proverbs were no novelty, walked and talked, stared at others, and were themselves stared at; and this perhaps was the greatest amusement of all. Baron von Konigstein did certainly to-night look neither like an unsuccessful gamester, nor a designing villain. Among many who were really amusing, he was the most so; and, apparently without the least consciousness of it, attracted the admiration of all. To the Trevor party he had attached himself immediately, and was constantly at her ladyship's side, introducing to her, in the course of the evening, his own and Mr. St. George's particular friends—Mr. and Mrs. Fitzloom. Among many smiling faces, Vivian Grey's was clouded; the presence of the baron annoyed him. When they first met, he was conscious that he was stiff and cool—extraordinarily cool. One moment's reflection convinced him of the folly of his conduct, and he made a struggle to be very civil—extraordinarily civil. In five minutes' time he had involuntarily insulted the baron, who stared at his friend, and evidently did not comprehend him.

"Grey," said his excellency, very quietly, "you're not in a good humour to night. What's

the matter? This is not at all a temper to come to a fête in. What! won't Miss Fane dance with you?" asked the baron, with an arch smile.

"I wonder what can induce your excellency to talk such nonsense!"

"Your excellency!—by Jove! that's good. Excellency! why, what the deuce is the matter with the man? It is Miss Fane, then—eh?"

"Baron von Konigstein, I wish you to understand—"

"My dear fellow, I never could understand any thing. I think you have insulted me in a most disgraceful manner, and I positively must call you out, unless you promise to dine at my rooms with me to-morrow, to meet De Bœffleura."

"I cannot."

"Why not? you've no engagement with Lady Madeleine I know, for St. George has agreed to come."

"Yes!"

"De Bœffleura leaves Ems next week. It is sooner than he expected, and I wish to have a quiet evening together before he goes. I should be very vexed if you were not there. We've scarcely been enough together lately. What with the New House in the evening, and riding parties in the morning, and those Fitzloom girls, with whom St. George is playing a most foolish game—he'll be taken in now, if he's not on his guard—we really never meet, at least not in a quiet friendly way; and so now, will you come?"

"St. George is positively coming!"

"O yes! positively; don't be afraid of his gaining ground on the little Violet in your absence."

"Well, then, my dear Von Konigstein, I will come."

"Well, that's yourself again. It made me quite unhappy to see you look so sour and melancholy; one would have thought that I was some troublesome bore, Prince Salvinski at least, by the way you spoke to me. Well, mind you come—it's a promise:—good. I must go and say just one word to the lovely little Saxon, and, by-the-by, Grey, one word before I'm off. List to a friend, you're on the wrong scent about Miss Fane; St. George, I think, has no chance there, and now no wish to succeed. The game's your own, if you like; trust my word, she's an angel. The good powers prosper you!" so saying the baron ran off.

Mr. St. George had danced with Miss Fane the only quadrille in which Lady Madeleine allowed her to join. He was now waltzing with Aurelia Fitzloom, and was at the head of a band of adventurous votaries of Terpsichore; who, wearied with the commonplace convenience of a saloon, had ventured to invoke the muse on the lawn.

"A most interesting sight, Lady Madeleine Trevor!" said Mr. Fitzloom, as he offered his arm to her ladyship, and advised her instant presence as patrons of the "*Fête du village*," for such Baron von Konigstein had most happily termed it. "A delightful man that Baron von Konigstein, and says such delightful things! *Fête du village*! how very good!"

"That is Miss Fitzloom, then, whom my brother is waltzing with?" asked Lady Madeleine, in her usual kind tone.

"Not exactly, my Lady Madeleine," said Mr. Fitzloom, "not exactly Miss Fitzloom, rather Miss Aurelia Fitzloom, my third daughter; our third eldest, as Mrs. Fitzloom sometimes says; for a

ly it is necessary to distinguish, with such a family as ours, you know, my Lady Madeleine!"

"But don't you think, Mr. Fitzloom, that your *third* daughter is a sufficiently definite description?" asked her ladyship.

"Why, you know, my Lady Madeleine, there *might* be a mistake. There's the third youngest! and if one say the *third* merely, why, as Mrs. Fitzloom sometimes says, the question is, *which* is *which*?"

"That view of the case, I confess, did not strike me before."

"Mr. Grey," said Miss Fane, for she was now leaning upon his arm; "have you any objection to walk up and down the terrace? the evening is deliciously soft, but even with the protection of a schermere I scarcely dare venture to stand still. Lady Madeleine seems very much engaged at present. What amusing people these Fitzlooms are!"

"Mrs. Fitzloom; I've not heard her voice yet."

"No; Mrs. Fitzloom does not talk. St. George says she makes it a rule never to speak in the presence of a stranger. She deals plenteously, however, at home, in domestic apothegms. If you could but hear him imitating them all! Whenever she does speak, she finishes all her sentences by confessing that she is conscious of her own deficiencies; but that she has taken care to give her daughters the very best education. They are what St. George calls fine dashing girls, and I'm very glad he's made friends with them; for, after all, he must find it rather dull here. By-the-by, Mr. Grey, I'm afraid that you can't find this evening very amusing; the absence of a favourite pursuit always makes a sensible void; and these walls must remind you of more piquant pleasures than waltzing with fine London ladies, or promenading up a dull terrace with an invalid."

"Miss Fane, I fear that you are a bitter satirist; but I assure you that you are quite misinformed as to the mode in which I generally pass my evenings."

"I hope, I am, Mr. Grey!" said Miss Fane, in rather a serious tone; "I wish I could also be mistaken in my suspicions of the mode in which St. George spends his time. He's sadly changed. For the first month that we were here, he seemed to prefer nothing in the world to our society, and now—I was nearly saying that we had not seen him for one single evening these three weeks. I cannot understand what you find at this house of such absorbing interest. Although I know you think I am much mistaken in my suspicions, still I feel very anxious, very anxious indeed. I spoke to St. George to-day, but he scarcely answered me; or said that which it was a pleasure for me to forget."

"Mr. St. George should feel highly gratified in having excited such an interest in the—mind of Miss Fane."

"He cannot—he should not feel more gratified than all who are my friends; for all who are such, I must ever experience the liveliest interest."

"How happy must those be who feel that they have a right to count Miss Fane among their friends?"

"I have the pleasure then, I assure you, of making many happy, and among them, Mr. Grey."

Vivian was surprised that he did not utter some usual complimentary answer; but he knew not

why the words stuck in his throat; and, instead of speaking, he was thinking of what had been spoken. In a second he had mentally repeated Miss Fane's answer a thousand times—it rang in his ears—it thrilled his blood. In another moment he was ashamed of being such a fool.

"How brilliant are these gardens!" said Vivian, looking at the sky.

"Very brilliant!" said Violet Fane, looking on the ground. Conversation seemed nearly extinct, and yet neither offered to turn back.

"Good heavens! you are ill, Miss Fane," suddenly exclaimed Vivian, when, on accidentally turning to his companion, he found she was in tears. "Shall we go back, or will you wait here?—Can I fetch anything?—I fear you are very ill!"

"No, no! not very ill, but very foolish; let us walk on, Mr. Grey, walk on—walk on." Here Vivian thought that she was going into hysterics; but heaving a deep sigh, she seemed suddenly to recover.

"I am ashamed, Mr. Grey, of myself—this trouble, this foolishness—what can you think? but I am so agitated, so nervous—I hope you'll forget—I hope—"

"Perhaps the air has suddenly affected you—had we not better go in?—Pray, pray, compose yourself. I trust that nothing I have said—that nothing has happened—that no one has dared to say, or do, anything to offend you—to annoy you? Speak, pray, speak, Miss Fane—dear Miss Fane, the—the—"—the words died on Vivian's lips, yet a power he could not withstand urged him to speak—"the—the—the baron?"

"O!" almost shrieked Miss Fane—"No, no, stop one second—let me compose myself—an effort, and I must be well—nothing, nothing has happened, and no one has done or said anything; but it is of something that should be said—of something that should be done, that I was thinking, and it overcame me."

"Miss Fane," said Vivian, "if there be any service which I can do—any advice which I can give—any possible way that I can exert myself for you, O, speak!—O, speak—speak with the most perfect confidence—with firmness—with courage; do not fear that your motives will be misconceived—that your purpose will be misinterpreted—that your confidence will be misunderstood. You are addressing one who would lay down his own life for you—who is willing to perform all your commands, and forget them when performed. I beseech you to trust me—believe me that you shall not repent."

She answered not, but holding down her head, covered her face with her small white hand; her lovely face which was crimsoned with her flashing blood. They were now at the end of the terrace—to return was impossible. If they remained stationary, they must be perceived and joined. What was to be done? O moment of agony!—He led her down a solitary walk still further from the house. As they proceeded in silence, the bursts of the music, and the loud laughter of the joyous guests became fainter and fainter, till at last the sounds died away into echo—and echo into silence.

A thousand thoughts dashed through Vivian's mind in rapid succession; but a painful one to him, to any man,—always remained the last. His companion would not speak; yet to allow her to

return home without freeing her mind of the burthen, the fearful burthen, which evidently overwhelmed it, was impossible. At length he broke a silence which seemed to have lasted an age.

"Miss Fane, do not believe for an instant that I am taking advantage of an agitated moment, to extract from you a confidence which you may repent. I feel assured that I am right in supposing that you have contemplated in a calmer moment the possibility of my being of service to you; that, in short, there is something in which you require my assistance, my co-operation—an assistance, Miss Fane, a co-operation, which, if it produce any benefit to you, will make me at length feel that I have not lived in vain. I cannot, I cannot allow any feelings of false delicacy to prevent me from assisting you in giving utterance to thoughts, which you have owned it is absolutely necessary should be expressed. Remember, remember that you have allowed me to believe that we are friends: do not, do not prove by your silence, that we are friends only in name."

"I am overwhelmed—I cannot speak—my face burns with shame; I have miscalculated my strength of mind—perhaps my physical strength; what, what must you think of me?" She spoke in a low and smothered voice.

"Think of you, Miss Fane! every thing which the most devoted respect dare think of an object which it reverences. O! understand me; do not believe that I am one who would presume an instant on my situation—because I have accidentally witnessed a young and lovely woman betrayed into a display of feeling which the artificial forms of cold society cannot contemplate, and dare to ridicule. You are speaking to one who also has felt; who, though a man, has wept; who can comprehend sorrow; who can understand the most secret sensations of an agitated spirit. Dare to trust me. Be convinced that hereafter, neither by word, nor look, hint, nor sign on my part, shall you feel, save by your own wish, that you have appeared to Vivian Grey in any other light than as the accomplished Miss Fane, the idol of an admiring circle."

"You are too, too good—generous, generous man, I dare trust any thing to you that I dare trust to human being; but—" here her voice died away.

"Miss Fane, it is a painful, a most painful thing for me to attempt to guess your thoughts, to anticipate your confidence; but, if—if—it be of Mr. St. George that you are thinking, have no fear respecting him—have no fear about his present situation—trust to me that there shall be no anxiety for his future one. I will be his unknown guardian, his unseen friend; the promoter of your wishes, the protector of your—"

"No, no, Mr. Grey," said Miss Fane, with firmness, and looking quickly up, as if her mind were relieved by discovering that all this time Vivian had never imagined she was thinking of him. "No, no, Mr. Grey, you are mistaken; it is not of Mr. St. George, of Mr. St. George only, that I am thinking. I—I—I am much better now; I shall be able in an instant to speak—be able, I trust, to forget how foolish—how very foolish I have been.

"Let us walk on," continued Miss Fane; "let us walk on; we can easily account for our absence if it be remarked; and it is better, much better, that it should be all over: I feel quite well, quite, quite well; and shall be able to speak quite firmly now."

"Do not hurry; compose yourself, I beseech you; there is no fear of our absence being remarked, Lady Madeleine is so surrounded."

"After what has passed, Mr. Grey, it seems ridiculous in me to apologize, as I had intended, for speaking to you on a graver subject than what has generally formed a point of conversation between us. I feared that you might misunderstand the motives which have dictated my conduct: I have attempted not to appear agitated, and I have been overcome. I trust that you will not be offended if I recur to the subject of the New House. Do not believe that I ever would have allowed my fears, my girlish fears, so to have overcome my discretion,—so to have overcome, indeed, all propriety of conduct on my part,—as to have induced me to have sought an interview with you, to moralize to you about your mode of life. No, no, it is not of this that I wish to speak, or rather that I will speak. I will hope, I will pray, that St. George and yourself have never found in that which you have followed as an amusement, the source, the origin, the cause of a single unhappy, or even anxious moment; Mr. Grey, I will believe all this."

"Dearest Miss Fane, believe it, believe it with confidence. Of St. George, I can with sincerity aver, that it is my firm opinion, that far from being involved, his fortune is not in the slightest degree injured. Believe me, I will not attempt to quiet you now, as I would have done at any other time, by telling you that you magnify your fears, and allow your feelings to exaggerate the danger which exists. There has been danger—there is danger;—play, very high, tremendously high play, has been, and is pursued at this New House, but Mr. St. George has never been a loser; and, believe me, if the exertions of man can avail, never shall—never shall, at least, unfairly. Of the other individual, Miss Fane, whom you have honoured by the interest which you have kindly professed in his welfare, allow me to say one word: no one can detest, more thoroughly detest, any practice which exists in this world—Miss Fane cannot detest impurity with a more perfect antipathy—than he does the gaming-table. You know the miserable, but miraculous fortune, which made my first night here notorious. My luck has stuck by me like a curse, and from the customs of society, from which it is impossible to emancipate ourselves; a man in my situation cannot cease to play without incurring a slur upon his reputation. You will smile at the reputation which depends almost upon the commission of a vile folly; we have not time to argue these subtle points at present. It is sufficient for me to say, that I cannot resist this custom without being prepared to chastise the insolence of those who will consequently insult me. In that case, my reputation, already tarnished by the non-commission of a folly, will, according to the customs of society, be utterly ruined, unless it be re-burnished by the commission of a crime. I have no pistol now, Miss Fane, for my fellow-creatures,—my right hand is still red with the blood of my friend. To play, therefore, with me has been a duty: I still win—the duty continues—but, believe me, that I shall never lose; and I look forward, with eagerness to the moment when this thralldom shall cease."

"O! you've made me so happy! I feel so persuaded that you have not deceived me—the tones of your voice, your manner, your expression, con-

ce me that you have been sincere, and that I am
happy—at least for the present.”

“For ever I trust, Miss Fane.”

“Let me, let me now prevent all future misery—
me speak about that which has long dwelt on
mind like a nightmare—about that which I did
r it was almost too late to speak. Not of your
smit, Mr. Grey—not even of that fatal and hor-
pursuit, do I now think, but of your companion
this amusement, in all amusements—it is he, he
it I dread, that I look upon with horror, even to
n, I cannot say, with hatred!”

“The baron!” said Vivian, calmly.

“I cannot name him—O! dread him, fear him,
oid him! it is he that I mean, he of whom I
ought that you were the victim. Possessing, as
does, all the qualifications which apparently
uld render a man's society desirable—you must
ve been surprised, you must have wondered at
r conduct towards him. O! Mr. Grey, when
dy Madeleine turned from him with coolness,
en she answered him in tones which to you
ight have appeared harsh; she behaved to him,
comparison to what is his due, and what we
metimes feel to be our duty, with affection—ac-
ally with affection and regard. O! no human
ing can know what horror is, until he looks upon
fellow-creature with the eyes that I look upon
at man.” She leaned upon Vivian's arm with
r whole weight, and even then he thought she
ust have sunk—neither spoke. How solemn is
e silence of sorrow!

“I am overcome,” continued Miss Fane; “the
membrance of what he has done overwhelms me
-I cannot speak it—the recollection is death—yet
u must know it. That you might know it, I
ve before attempted. I wished to have spared
yself the torture which I now endure. It would
rhaps have been more consistent with my dig-
ity, it would perhaps have been more correct, to
ave been silent—but I felt it—I felt it a duty
hich I owed to a fellow-creature—and your con-
duct, your kind, your generous conduct to me this
vening, repays me even for all this pain. You
must know it, you must know it. I will write—
y! that will do. I will write—I cannot speak
ow, it is impossible, but beware of him; you, you
re so young!”

“I have no words now to thank you, Miss Fane,
r this. Had I been the victim of Von Konig-
ey, I should have been repaid for all my misery
y feeling that you regret its infliction; but I trust
hat I am in no danger;—though young, though
very young, I fear that I am one who must not
ount my time by calendars. I may truly say of
myself, ‘an aged interpreter, though young in
lays.’ Would that I could be deceived! Fear
not for your cousin. Trust to one whom you
ave made think better of this world, and of his
fellow-creatures.”

The sound of approaching footsteps, and the
light laugh of pleasure, told of some who were
wandering like themselves.

“We had better return,” said Miss Fane; “I
fear that Lady Madeleine will observe that I look
unwell. Some one approaches.—No!—they pass
only the top of the walk.” It was St. George and
Aurelia Fitzloom.

Quick flew the brilliant hours; and soon the
dance was over, and the music mute. Lady Ma-
deleine Trevor and Miss Fane retired long before

the party broke up, and Vivian accompanied them
and Mr. Sherborne. He did not return to the gay
saloon, but found himself walking in the same
gardens, by the side of the same river, lighted by
the same moon, and listening to the same night-
ingale, as on the preceding night. How much had
happened to him in the course of one day's circle!
How changed were his feelings; not merely from
yesternight, but even from a few hours since. Sh
loved him!—yes, she must love him. All was
forgotten; he felt as if his dilated soul despised its
frail and impure tenement. Now, indeed, he was
in love. The interview with Violet Fane came,
after his conversation with Lady Madeleine, like
incense after music. Think not that he was fickle,
inconstant, capricious: his love for the first had
insensibly grown out of his admiration of the
other; as a man gazing on a magnificent sunset,
remains, when the heavens have ceased to glow,
with his eyes fixed on the evening star.

It was late when he retired. As he opened his
door he was surprised to find lights in his chamber.
The figure of a man appeared seated at the table.
It moved—it was Esaper George.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE reader will remember that Vivian had
agreed to dine, on the day after the fête, with the
baron, in his private apartments. This was an
arrangement which, in fact, the custom of the
house did not permit; but the irregularities of
great men who are attended by chasseurs, are oc-
casionally winked at by a supple maitre d'hôtel.
Vivian had various reasons for regretting his ac-
ceptance of the invitation; and he never shook
hands with the Chevalier de Bœffleurs, apparently
with greater cordiality, than on the day on which
he met him at dinner at the Baron von Konig-
stein's. Mr. St. George had not arrived.

“Past five!” said his excellency; “riding out, I
suppose, with the Fitzlooms. Aurelia is certainly
a fine girl; but I should think that Lady Madeleine
would hardly approve the connexion. The St.
Georges have blood in their veins; and would, I
suppose, as soon think of marrying a Fitzloom, as
we Germans should of marrying a woman without
a von before her name. We're quite alone, Grey,
only the chevalier and St. George. I had an idea
of asking Salvinski; but he is such a regular steam
engine, and began such a long story last night
about his interview with the king of Ashantee, that
the bare possibility of his taking it into his head to
finish it to-day, frightened me. You were away
early from the archduke's last night. The busi-
ness went off well.”

“Very well, indeed!” said the Chevalier de
Bœffleurs; completing by this speech the first
dozen of words which he had uttered since his stay
at Ems.

“I think that last night Lady Madeleine Trevor
looked perfectly magnificent; and a certain lady
too, Grey, eh!—Here's St. George. My dear fel-
low, how are you? Has the fair Aurelia recovered
from the last night's fatigues? All in that quarter
goes on quite well, I hope. Now, Ernstorff,—din-
ner, soon as possible.”

The baron made up to-day, certainly, for the

silence of his friend, the chevalier. Story after story, adventure after adventure, followed each other with the most exciting haste. In fact, the baron never ceased talking the whole dinner, except when he refreshed himself with wine, which he drank copiously. A nice observer would perhaps have considered the baron's high spirit artificial, and his conversation an effort. Yet his excellency's temper, though lively, was generally equable; and his ideas, which always appeared to occur easily, were usually thrown out in fluent phraseology. The dinner was long, and a great deal of wine was drunk; more, much more, than most of the parties present for a long time had been accustomed to. About eight o'clock the chevalier proposed going to the Redoute, but the baron objected.

"Let's have an evening altogether: surely we've had enough of the Redoute. In my opinion one of the advantages of the fête is, that there is no New House to-night. Conversation is a novelty. On a moderate calculation, I must have told you to-day at least two thousand original anecdotes. I've done my duty. It's the chevalier's turn now. Come, De Bœffleurs—a choice one."

"I remember a story Prince Salvinski once told me."

"No, no—that's too bad—none of that Polish bear's romance; if we have his stories, we may as well have his company."

"But it's a very curious story," continued the chevalier, with a little animation.

"O! so is every story according to the storier."

"I think, Von Konigstein, you imagine no one can tell a story but yourself," said De Bœffleurs, actually indignant. Vivian had never heard him speak so much before, and really began to believe that he was not quite an automaton.

"Let's have it!" said St. George.

"It's a story told of a Polish nobleman—a count somebody:—I never can remember their crack-jaw names! Well! the point is this," said the silent little chevalier, who apparently already repented of the boldness of his offer, and, misdoubting his powers, wished to begin with the end of his tale: "the point is this—he was playing one day at *écarté* with the Governor of Wilna—the stake was trifling; but he had a bet, you see with the governor, of a thousand rubles; a bet with the governor's secretary—never mind the amount, say two hundred and fifty, you see; then, he went on the turn-up with the commandant's wife; and took the pips on the trumps with the Archbishop of Warsaw. To understand the point of the story, you see, you must have a distinct conception how the game stood. You see, St. George, there was the bet with the governor, one thousand rubles; the governor's secretary,—never mind the amount, say two hundred and fifty; the turn-up with the commandant's lady, and the pipe with the Archbishop of Warsaw. Proposed three times—one for the king—the governor drew ace—the governor was already three and the ten. When the governor scored king, the archbishop gave the odds—drew knave queen one hand—the count offered to propose fourth time—governor refused. King to six, ace fell to knave—queen cleared on—governor lost, besides bets with the whole *etat-major*; the secretary gave his bill; the commandant's lady pawned her jewels; and the archbishop was done on the pips!"

"By Jove, what a Salvinski!"

"How many trumps had the governor?" asked St. George.

"Three," said the chevalier.

"Then it's impossible: I don't believe the story; it couldn't be."

"I beg your pardon," said the chevalier; "you see the governor had—"

"For heaven's sake, don't let us have it all over again!" said the baron. "Well! if this be your model for an after-dinner anecdote, which ought to be as piquant as an anchovy toast, I'll never complain of your silence in future. I'm sure you never learned this in the Palais-Royal!"

"The story's a true story," said the chevalier: "have you got a pack of cards, Von Konigstein? I'll show it you."

"There is not such a thing in the room," said the baron.

"Well, I never heard of a room without a pack of cards before," said the chevalier; "I'll send for one to my own apartments."

"O! by-the-by, perhaps Ernstorff has got a pack. Here, Ernstorff, have you got a pack of cards! That's good; bring it immediately."

The cards were brought, and the chevalier began to fight his battle over again; but could not satisfy Mr. St. George. "You see there was the bet with the governor, and the pips, as I said before, with the Archbishop of Warsaw."

"My dear De Bœffleurs, let's no more of this. If you like to have a game of *écarté* with St. George, well and good; but as for quarrelling the whole evening about some blundering lie of Salvinski's, it really is too much. You two can play, and I can talk to Don Vivian, who, by-the-by, is rather of the rueful countenance to-night. Why, my dear fellow, I haven't heard your voice this evening:—frightened by the fate of the Archbishop of Warsaw, I suppose?"

"*Ecarté* is so devilish dull," said St. George: "and it's such a trouble to deal."

"I'll deal for both, if you like," said De Bœffleurs; "I'm used to dealing."

"O! no—I won't play *écarté*; let's have something in which we can all join."

"Rouge-et-noir," suggested the chevalier, in a careless tone, as if he had no taste for the amusement.

"There isn't enough—is there?" asked St. George.

"O! two are enough, you know—one deal, much more four."

"Well, I don't care—rouge-et-noir then—let's have rouge-et-noir:—Von Konigstein, what say you to rouge-et-noir? De Bœffleurs says we can play it here very well. Come, Grey!"

"O! rouge-et-noir, rouge-et-noir," said the baron: "haven't you both had rouge-et-noir enough? A'st I to be allowed one holiday! Well, anything to please you; so rouge-et-noir, if it must be so."

"If all wish it, I have no objection," said Vivian.

"Well, then, let's sit down; Ernstorff has, I dare say, another pack of cards, and St. George will be dealer, I know he likes that ceremony."

"No, no, I appoint the chevalier."

"Very well," said De Bœffleurs; "the plan will be for two to bank against the table; the table to play on the same colour by joint agreement. You can join me, Von Konigstein, and pay or receive with me, from Mr. St. George and Grey."

"I'll bank with you, if you like, chevalier," said Vivian, very quietly.

"O! certainly, Mr. Grey—certainly, Grey—most certainly; that is, if you like:—but perhaps the baron is more used to banking; you perhaps don't understand it."

"Perfectly; it appears to me to be very simple."

"No—don't you bank, Grey," said St. George; "I want you to play with me against the chevalier and the baron—I like your luck."

"Luck is very capricious, remember, Mr. St. George."

"O, no! I like your luck; I like your luck—don't bank."

"Be it so."

Playing commenced: an hour elapsed, and the situation of none of the parties was materially different to what it had been when they began the game. Vivian proposed leaving off; but Mr. St. George avowed that he felt very fortunate, and that he had a presentiment that he should win. Another hour elapsed, and he had lost considerably.—Eleven o'clock.—Vivian's luck had also deserted him. Mr. St. George was losing desperately.—Midnight.—Vivian had lost back half his gains on the season. St. George still more desperate; all his coolness had deserted him. He had persisted obstinately against the run on the red; then floundered, and got entangled in a see-saw, which alone cost him a thousand.

Ernstorff now brought in refreshments; and for a moment they ceased playing. The baron opened a bottle of champagne; and St. George and the chevalier were stretching their legs and composing their minds in very different ways—the first in walking rapidly up and down the room, and the other by lying very quietly at his full length on the sofa. Vivian was employed in building houses with the cards.

"Grey," said the Chevalier de Bœffleurs, "I can't imagine why you don't for a moment try to forget the cards; that's the only way to win. Never sit musing over the table."

But Grey was not to be persuaded to give up building his pagoda; which, now many stories high, like a more celebrated, but scarcely more substantial structure, fell with a crash. Vivian collected the scattered cards into two divisions.

"Now!" said the baron, seating himself, "for St. George's revenge."

The chevalier and the greatest sufferer took their places.

"Is Ernstorff coming in again, baron?" asked Vivian, very calmly.

"No! I think not."

"Let us be sure: it's disagreeable to be disturbed at this time of night, and so interested as we are."

"Lock the door, then;" said St. George.

"A very good plan," said Vivian; and he locked it accordingly.

"Now, gentlemen," said Vivian, rising from the table, and putting both packs of cards into his pocket—"Now, gentlemen, I have another game to play." The chevalier started on his chair—the baron turned quite pale, but both were silent. "Mr. St. George," continued Vivian, "I think that you are in debt to the Chevalier de Bœffleurs upwards of two thousand pounds; and to Baron von Konigstein, something more than half that sum. I have to inform you, sir, that it is utterly unnece-

sary for you to satisfy the claims of either of these gentlemen, which are founded neither in law, nor in honour."

"Mr. Grey, what am I to understand?" asked the quiet Chevalier de Bœffleurs, with the air of a wolf, and the voice of a lion.

"Understand, sir!" answered Vivian, sternly; "that I am not one who will be bullied by a black-leg."

"Grey! good God! Grey! what do you mean?" asked the baron.

"That which it is my duty, not my pleasure, to explain, Baron von Konigstein."

"If you mean to insinuate," burst forth the chevalier, "if you mean to insinuate—"

"I mean to insinuate nothing, sir; I leave insinuations and innuendoes to shuffling *chevaliers d'industrie*. I mean to prove every thing."

Mr. St. George did not speak, but seemed as utterly astounded and overwhelmed as Baron von Konigstein himself; who, with his arm leaning on the table, his hands clasped, and the forefinger of his right hand playing convulsively on his left, was pale as death, and did not even breathe.

"Gentlemen," said Vivian, "I shall not detain you long, though I have much to say that is to the purpose. I am perfectly cool, and believe me, perfectly resolute. Let me recommend to you all the same temperament—it may be better for you. Rest assured, that if you flatter yourselves that I am one to be pigeoned, and then bullied, you are mistaken. In one word, I am aware of every thing that has been arranged for the reception of Mr. St. George and myself this evening. Your marked cards are in my pocket, and can only be obtained by you with my life. Here are two of us against two; we are equally matched in number, and I, gentlemen, am armed. If I were not, you would not dare to go to extremities. Is it not, then, the wisest course to be temperate, my friends?"

"This is some vile conspiracy of your own, fellow," said De Bœffleurs; "marked cards indeed! a pretty tale, forsooth! The ministers of a first-rate power playing with marked cards! The story will gain credit, and on the faith of whom! An adventurer that no one knows; who, having failed this night in his usual tricks, and lost money which he cannot pay, takes advantage of the marked cards, which he has not succeeded in introducing, and pretends, forsooth, that they are those which he has stolen from our table; our own cards being, previously to his accusation, concealed in a secret pocket."

The impudence of the fellow staggered even Vivian. As for Mr. St. George, he stared like a wild man. Before Vivian could answer him, the baron had broke silence. It was with the greatest effort that he seemed to dig his words out of his breast.

"No—no—this is too much! it is all over! I am lost; but I will not add crime to crime. Your courage and your fortune have saved you, Mr. Grey, and your friend, from the designs of villains. And you! wretch, said he, turning to De Bœffleurs, sleep now in peace; at length you have undone me." He leaned on the table, and buried his face in his hands.

"Chicken-hearted fool!" said the chevalier, "is this the end of all your promises, and all your pledges! But remember, sir! remember. I have no taste for scenes. Good night, gentlemen. Baron, I expect to hear from you."

"Stop, sir!" said Vivian; "no one leaves this room without my permission."

"I am at your service, sir, when you please," said the chevalier, throwing down his card.

"It is not my intention to detain you long, sir; far from it; I have every inclination to assist you in your last exit from this room, had I time. It should not be by the door; as it is, go! in the devil's name." So saying, he hurled the adventurous Frenchman half down the corridor.

"Baron von Konigstein," said Vivian, turning to the baron; "you have proved yourself, by your conduct this evening, to be a better man than I imagined you. I confess that I thought you had been too much accustomed to scenes, to be sensible of the horror of detection."

"Never!" said the baron, with emphasis, with energy. The firm voice and manner in which he pronounced this single word, wonderfully contrasted with his delivery when he had last spoken, but his voice immediately died away.

"'Tis all over! 'tis all over! I have no wish to excite your pity, gentlemen, or gain your silence, by practising upon your feelings. Be silent; I am not the less ruined; not the less disgraced; not the less utterly undone. Be silent; my honour, all the same in four and twenty hours, has gone for ever: I have no motive then to deceive you. You must believe what I speak; even what I speak, the most degraded, the vilest of men. I say again, *never*, never, never, never, never was my honour before sullied, though guilty of a thousand follies. You see before you, gentlemen, the unhappy victim of circumstances; of circumstances which he has in vain struggled to control; to which he has at length fallen a victim. I am not pretending, for a moment, that my crimes are to be accounted for by an inexorable fate, and not to be expiated by my everlasting misery: No, no! I have been too weak to be virtuous; but I have been tried; tried most bitterly. I am the most unfortunate of men; I was not born to be a villain. Four years have passed since I was banished from the country in which I was honoured; my prospects in life blasted; my peace of mind destroyed; and all because a crime was committed, of any participation in which I am as innocent as yourselves. Driven in despair to wander, I tried, in the wild dissipation of Naples, to forget my existence and my misery. I found my fate in the person of this vile Frenchman, who never since has quitted me. Even after two years of madness in that fatal place, my natural disposition rallied; I struggled to save myself; I quitted it. I was already involved to De Bœffleurs; I became still more so, in gaining from him the means of satisfying all claims against me. Alas! I found I had sold myself to a scoundrel; a most unadulterated villain; a devil, a very devil; with a heart like an adder's. Incapable of a stray generous sensation, he has looked upon mankind during his whole life, with the eyes of a bully of a gaming-house. I still struggled to free myself from this man; and I indemnified him for his advances, by procuring him a place in the mission to which, with the greatest difficulty and perseverance, I had at length procured my appointment. In public life I yet hoped to forget my private misery. At Frankfurt I felt, that though not happy, I might be calm. I determined never again even to run the risk of enduring the slavery of debt. I forswore, with the most solemn oaths, the gaming-table; and had it

not been for the perpetual sight of De Bœffleurs, I might, perhaps, have felt at ease; though the remembrance of my blighted prospects, the eternal feeling that I experienced of being born for noble ends, was quite sufficient perpetually to embitter my existence. The second year of my Frankfurt appointment, I was tempted to this unhappy place. The unexpected sight of faces which I had known in England, though they called up the most painful associations, strengthened me, nevertheless, in my resolution to be virtuous. My unexpected, my extraordinary fortune at the Redoute, the first night, made me forget all my resolves, and has led to all this misery. I make my sad tale brief. I got involved at the New House: De Bœffleurs once more assisted me; though his terms were most severe. Yet, yet again, I was mad enough, vile enough, to risk what I did not possess. I lost to Prince Salvinski and a Russian gentleman, a considerable sum on the night before the *fête*. It is often the custom of the New House, as you know, among men who are acquainted, to pay and receive all losses which are considerable on the next night of meeting. The *fête* gave me breathing time: It was not necessary to redeem my pledge till the fourth night. I rushed to De Bœffleurs; he refused to assist me; alleging his own losses, and his previous advance. What was to be done! No possibility of making any arrangement with Salvinski. Had he won of me as others have done, an arrangement, though painful, would perhaps have been possible; but, by a singular fate, whenever I have chanced to be successful, it is of this man that I have won. De Bœffleurs then was the only chance. He was inexorable. I prayed to him; I promised him every thing: I offered him any terms; I besought him on my knees;—in vain! in vain! At length, when he had worked me up to the point of last despair, he whispered *hope*. I listened,—let me be quick!—why finish—why finish; you know I fell!" The baron again covered his face, and appeared perfectly overwhelmed.

"By God! it's too horrible," said St. George. "Grey, let's do something for him?"

"My dear St. George," said Vivian, "be calm—you are taken by surprise: I was prepared for all this. Believe me, it is better for you to leave us. If, on consideration, we think that any thing,—any real benefit can be done to this unhappy gentleman, I am sure that we shall not be backward. But I cannot permit your generous feelings to be taken advantage of by a gamester—a madman, who, if freed from his present difficulties this moment, will commit the same follies and the same crimes to-morrow. I recommend you to retire, and meet me in the morning: breakfast with me at eight, we can then arrange every thing."

Vivian's conduct had been so decisive, and so suddenly so well matured, that St. George felt, that in the present case it was for him only to obey; and squeezing Vivian's hand very warmly, he retired, with wonder still expressed on his countenance; for he had not yet, in the slightest degree, recovered from the first surprise.

"Baron von Konigstein," said Vivian to the unhappy man, "we are alone. Mr. St. George has left the room; you are freed from the painful presence of the cousin of Captain Fane."

"You know all, then!" exclaimed the baron, quickly looking up; "or you have read my secret thoughts. How wonderful! at that very moment

I was thinking of my friend. Would I had died with him! You know all, then; and now—now you must believe me guilty. Yet, Mr. Grey, at this moment—at this moment of deepest affliction, of annihilating sorrow; when I can gain nothing by deceit; when, whatever may have been my loose expressions in a lighter hour, I am thinking of another world: I swear—and if I swear falsely, may I fall down a livid corpse at your feet,—I swear that I was guiltless of the crime for which I suffered, guiltless as yourself. Dare I ask if you believe me?"

He awaited Vivian's answer with the most eager anxiety; his mouth was open; his eyes half started from their sockets; had his life or reputation depended upon the answer, he could not have gasped with more convulsive agony.

"I do believe you."

"Then God be thanked! I owe you the greatest favour that I yet owe human being. What may be my fate—my end—I know not. Probably a few hours, and all will be over. Yet, before we part, sir, it would be a relief; you would be doing a kind and Christian service to a dying man, to bear a message from me to one with whom you are acquainted—to one whom I cannot now name."

"Lady Madeleine Trevor, sir?"

"Again you have read my thoughts! Lady Madeleine!—is it she who told you of my early history? Answer me, I beseech you."

"I cannot answer. All that I know is known to many."

"I must speak! if you have time, Mr. Grey, if you can listen for half an hour to a miserable being, it would be a consolation to me. I should die with ease, if I thought that Lady Madeleine could believe me innocent of that first great offence."

"Your excellency may address any thing to me, if it be your wish, even at this hour of the night. It may be better; after what has passed, we neither of us can sleep, and this business must be arranged at once."

"My object, Mr. Grey, is, that Lady Madeleine shall receive from me at this moment, at a time when I can have no interest to deceive, an account of the particulars of her cousin's, and my friend's death. I sent it written after the horrid event, but she was ill; and Trevor, who was very bitter against me, returned the letters unopened. For four years, I have never travelled without these rejected letters; this year I have them not. But you could convey to Lady Madeleine my story as now given to you; to you at this horrid moment. For God's sake do, sir, I beseech you!"

"Speak on, speak on!"

"I must say one word of my connexion with the family, to enable you fully to understand the horrid event, of which, if, as I believe, you only know what all know, you can form but a most imperfect conception. When I was minister at the court of London, I became acquainted—became, indeed, intimate with Mr. Trevor, then in office, the husband of Lady Madeleine. Her ladyship was just married. Trevor was an able and honourable man, but advanced in years; had he been younger, he was not the man to have riveted the affections of any woman. As it was, his marriage was a mere political match. I will not stop now to moralize on these unhappy connections, in which the affections on neither side are consulted; but assuredly, in the present instance, Trevor had

been more cautious in securing the boroughs of the earl, than the heart of the earl's daughter. I saw all this, Mr. Grey; I, still young, and with such blood flowing in my veins, that the youth of common men was actually old age in comparison with my sensations: I saw all this in the possession of all those accomplishments and qualities, which, according to the world, work such marvels with women. I saw all this, Mr. Grey: I, a libertine by principle. Of Lady Madeleine's beauty, of her soul, I need not speak. You have the happiness of being the friend of that matchless creature. Of myself, at that time, I may say, that though depraved, I was not heartless; and that there were moments when I panted to be excellent. Lady Madeleine and myself became friends: she found in me a companion, who not only respected her talents, and delighted in her conversation, but one who in return was capable of instructing, and was overjoyed to amuse her. I loved her; but when I loved her, sir, I ceased to be a libertine. At first I thought that nothing in the world could have tempted me to have allowed her for an instant to imagine that I dared to look upon her in any other light than as a friend; but the negligence, the coldness of Trevor, the overpowering mastery of my own passions, drove me one day past the line, and I wrote that which I dared not utter. But understand me, sir; it was no common, no usual letter that I wrote. It never entered into my mind for an instant to insult such a woman with the commonplace sophistry—the disguised sentiments of a ribald. No! no! I loved Lady Madeleine with all my spirit's strength. I would have sacrificed all my views in life—my ambition—my family—my fortune—my country, to have gained her; and I told her this in terms of the most respectful admiration. I worshipped the divinity, even while I attempted to profane the altar. Sir, when I had sent this letter, I was in despair. Conviction of the perfect insanity of my conduct flashed across my mind. I expected never to see her again. There came an answer; I opened it with the greatest agitation; to my surprise—an appointment. Why, why trouble you with a detail of my feelings at this moment—my mad hope—my dark despair! The moment for the interview arrived. I was received neither with affection, nor anger. In sorrow, in sorrow she spoke. I listened in despair. I was more madly in love with her than ever. That very love made me give her such evidences of a contrite spirit, that I was pardoned. I rose with a resolution to be virtuous—with a determination to be her friend; then, then I made the fatal promise which you know of—to be doubly the friend of a man, whose friend I already was; it was then that I pledged myself to Lady Madeleine to be the guardian spirit of her cousin."—Here the baron was so overpowered by his emotions that he leaned back in his chair, and ceased to speak. In a few minutes he resumed.

"Mr. Grey, I did my duty; by all that's sacred I did my duty! night, and day, I was with young Fane. A thousand times he was on the brink of ruin—a thousand times I saved him. One day—one never to be forgotten day—one most dark and damnable day, I called on him, and found him on the point of joining a coterie of the most desperate character. I remonstrated with him;—I entreated;—I supplicated him not to go—in vain. At last, he agreed to forego his engagement, on condition

that I dined with him. There were reasons that day of importance for my not staying with him; yet every consideration vanished, when I thought of her for whom I was exerting myself. I stayed with him. Fane was frantic this day; and, imagining, of course, that there was no chance of his leaving his home, I did not refuse to drink freely—to drink deeply! My doing so was the only chance of keeping him at home. On a sudden he started up, and would quit the house. My utmost exertions could not prevent him. At last I prevailed upon him to call upon the Trevors, as I thought that there, at least, he would be safe. He agreed. As we were passing down Pall Mall, we met two foreigners of distinction, and a noble of your country; they were men of whom we both knew little. I had myself introduced Fane to the foreigners a few days before, being aware that they were men of high rank. After some conversation, they asked us to join them at supper, at the house of their English friend. I declined; but nothing could induce Fane to refuse them; and I finally accompanied him. Play was introduced after supper; I made an ineffectual struggle to get Fane home; but I was too full of wine to be energetic. After losing a small sum, I got up from the table, and staggering to a sofa, fell fast asleep. Even as I passed Fane's chair in this condition, my master-thought was evident, and I pulled him by the shoulder; all was useless,—I woke to madness!"—It was terrible to witness the anguish of Von Konigstein.

"Could you not clear yourself?" asked Vivian, for he felt it necessary to speak.

"Clear myself! Every thing told against me. The villains were my friends, not the sufferer's; I was not injured; my dining with him was part of the conspiracy; he was intoxicated previous to his ruin. Conscious of my innocence, quite desperate, but confiding in my character, I accused the guilty trio, publicly accused them; they recriminated, and answered; and without clearing themselves, convinced the public that I was their dissatisfied and disappointed tool. I can speak no more." Here the head of the unhappy man sunk down upon his breast. His sad tale was told; the excitement was over; he now only felt his despair.

It is awful to witness sudden death; but, O! how much more awful is it to witness in a moment the moral fall of a fellow-creature! How tremendous is the quick succession of mastering passions! The firm, the terrifically firm, the madly resolute denial of guilt; that eagerness of protestation, which is a sure sign of crime; then the agonizing suspense before the threatened proof is produced—the hell of detection!—the audible anguish of sorrow—the curses of remorse—the silence of despair! Few of us, unfortunately, have passed through life without having beheld some instance of this instantaneous degradation of human nature. But O! how terrible is it when the confessed criminal has been but a moment before our friend. What a contrast to the laugh of joyous companionship is the quivering tear of an agonized frame! how terrible to be prayed to by those whose wishes a moment before we lived only to anticipate!

And bitter as might have been the feelings, and racked as might have been the heart of Von Konigstein, he could not have felt more at this moment—more exquisite anguish—deeper remorse—*than did Vivian Grey.* Openly to have disgraced

this man! How he had been deceived! His first crime—the first crime of such a being; of one who had suffered so much—so unjustly! Could he but have guessed the truth, he would have accused the baron in private—have awakened him to the enormity of his contemplated crime—have saved him from its perpetration—have saved him from the perpetration of any other. But he had imagined him to be a systematic, a heartless villain—and he looked forward to this night to avenge the memory of—the brother of her that he loved.

"Von Konigstein," said Vivian, after a long silence; "I feel for you. Had I known this, believe me, that I would have spared both you and myself this night of misery. I would have prevented you from looking back to this day with remorse. I am not one who delights in witnessing the misery or degradation of my species. Do not despair; you have suffered for that of which you were not guilty; you must not suffer now for what has passed. Much, much would I give to see you freed from that wretched knave, whose vile career I was very nearly tempted this evening to have terminated forever. To Lady Madeleine I shall make the communication you desire, and I will answer for her ladyship that your communication will be credited. Let this give you hope. As to the transactions of this evening, the knowledge of them can never transpire to the world. It is the interest of De Eœffleurs to be silent: if he speak, no one will credit the tale of such a creature, who, if he speak the truth, must proclaim his own infamy. For the perfect silence of the Trevor party, I pledge myself. They have done you too much injustice not to hail with pleasure the opportunity of making you some atonement. And now for the immediate calls upon your honour:—in what ~~are~~ are you indebted to Prince Salvinski and his friend?"

"Thousands!—two—three thousand!"

"I shall then have an opportunity of ridding myself of that, the acquisition of which to me has been matter of the greatest sorrow. Baron von Konigstein, your honour is saved:—I pledge myself to discharge the claims of Salvinski and his friend."

"Impossible! I cannot allow—"

"Stop, sir!—in this business I must command. I wish not to recur to what has passed—you make me. Surely, there can be no feelings of delicacy between us two now. If I gave you the treasures of the Indies you would not be under so great an obligation to me as you are already:—I say this with pain. I recommend you to leave Ems to-morrow. Public business will easily account for your sudden departure. Let us not meet again. And now, Von Konigstein, your character is yet safe;—you are yet in the prime of life;—you have vindicated yourself from that which has preyed upon your mind for years. Cease to accuse your fate; find the causes of your past misery in your unbridled passions. Restrain them, and be happy!" Vivian was about to leave the room, when the baron started from his seat, and seized his hand; he would have spoken, but the words died upon his lips; and before he could recover himself, Vivian had retired.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE sudden departure of Baron von Konigstein from the Baths excited great surprise and

All wondered at the cause, and all regretted the effect. The archduke missed his good stories; the rouge-et-noir table, his constant presence; and Monsieur le Restaurateur gave up, in consequence, an embryo idea of a fête and fire-works for his own benefit; which agreeable plan he had trusted, with his excellency's generous co-operation as steward or patron, he should have had no difficulty in carrying into execution. But no one was more surprised, and more regretted the absence of his excellency, than his friend, Mr. Fitzloom. What could be the reason?—Public business, of course. Indeed he had learned as much, confidentially, from Cracowsky. He tried Mr. Grey, but could elicit nothing satisfactorily; he pumped Mr. St. George, but produced only the waters of oblivion: Mr. St. George was gifted, when it suited his purpose, with a most convenient want of memory. There must be something in the wind—perhaps a war. Was the independence of Greece about to be acknowledged, or the dependence of Spain about to be terminated? What first-rate power had marched a million of soldiers into the land of a weak neighbour, on the mere pretence of exercising the military? What patriots had had the proud satisfaction of establishing a constitutional government without bloodshed—to be set aside in the course of the next month in the same manner? Had a conspiracy for establishing a republic in Russia been frustrated by the timely information of its intended first consul? Were the janissaries learning mathematics?—or had Lord Cochrane taken Constantinople in the James Watt steam-rocket? One of these many events must have happened—but which? At length Fitzloom decided on a general war. England must interfere either to defeat the ambition of France—or to curb the rapacity of Russia—or to check the arrogance of Austria—or to regenerate Spain—or to redeem Greece—or to protect Portugal—or to shield the Brazils—or to uphold the Bible Societies—or to consolidate the Greek Church—or to monopolize the commerce of Mexico—or to disseminate the principles of free trade—or to keep up her high character—or to keep up the price of corn. England must interfere. In spite of his conviction, however, Fitzloom did not alter the arrangements of his tour—he still intended to travel for two years. All he did, was to send immediate orders to his broker in England to sell two millions of consols. The sale was of course effected—the example followed—stocks fell ten per cent. The exchange ruined—money became scarce. The public funds of all Europe experienced a great decline—smashed the country banks—consequent runs on the London—a dozen baronets failed in one morning—Portland-place deserted—the cause of infant liberty took a terrific discount—the Greek loan disappeared like a vapour in a storm—all the new American states refused to pay their dividends—manufactories deserted—the revenue in a decline—the country in despair—orders in council—meetings of parliament—change of ministry—and a new loan! Such were the terrific consequences of a diplomatist turning black-leg! This secret history of the late distress is a lesson to all modern statesmen. Rest assured, that in politics, however tremendous the effects, the causes are often as trifling, and sometimes still more despicable.

Vivian found his reception by the Trevor party, the morning after the memorable night, a sufficient

reward for all his anxiety and exertion. St. George, a generous, open-hearted young man, full of gratitude to Vivian, and regretting his previous want of cordiality towards him, now delighted in doing full justice to his coolness, courage, and ability. Lady Madeleine said a great deal in the most graceful and impressive manner; but Violet Fane scarcely spoke. Vivian, however, read in her eyes her approbation and her gratitude. Mr. Sherborne received our hero with a set speech, in the middle of which he broke down; for the old gentleman's stout heart was full; and shaking Vivian warmly by the hand, he gave him, in a manner which affected all present, his blessing—"I knew I was right in my opinion of you; I saw directly you were not a mere young man of the present day—you all see I was right in my opinion; if I hadn't been, I should have owned it—I should have had the candour to acknowledge I was wrong—never ashamed to confess I'm mistaken."

"And now, how came you to discover the whole plot, Mr. Grey?" asked Lady Madeleine, "for we have not yet heard. Was it at the table?"

"They would hardly have had recourse to such clumsy instruments as would have given us the chance of detecting the conspiracy by casual observation. No, no, we owe our preservation and our gratitude to one, whom we must hereafter count among our friends. I was prepared, as I told you, for every thing; and though I had seen similar cards to those with which they played only a few hours before, it was with difficulty that I satisfied myself at the table, that the cards we lost by were prepared; so wonderful is the contrivance!"

"But who is the unknown friend?" said Violet Fane, with eagerness.

"I must have the pleasure of keeping you all in suspense," said Vivian: "cannot any of you guess?"

"None—none—none!"

"What say you then to—Easper George?"

"Impossible!"

"It is the fact, that he, and he alone, is our preserver. Soon after my arrival at this place, this singular being was seized with the unaccountable fancy of becoming my servant. You all remember his unexpected appearance one day in the saloon. In the evening of the same day, I found him sleeping at the door of my room; and thinking it high time that he should be taught more discretion, I spoke to him very seriously the next morning respecting his troublesome and eccentric conduct. It was then that I learned his wish. I objected, of course, to engaging a servant of whose previous character I was ignorant, and of which I could not be informed; and one whose peculiar habits would render both himself and his master notorious. While I declined his services, I also advised him most warmly to give up all idea of deserting his present mode of life, for which I thought him extremely well suited. The consequence of my lecture was, what you all perceived with surprise, a great change in Essper's character. He became serious, reserved, and retiring; and commenced his career as a respectable character, by throwing off his quaint costume. In a short time, by dint of making a few bad bargains, he ingratiated himself with Ernstorff, Von Konigstein's pompous chamberlain. His object in forming this connexion, was to gain

an opportunity of becoming acquainted with the duties of a gentleman's servant, and in this he has succeeded. About a week since, he purchased from Ernstorff a large quantity of cast-off apparel of the baron's, and other perquisites of the great man's valet; among these were some playing cards which had been borrowed one evening in great haste from the servant of that rascal, De Boeffeurs, and never returned. On accidentally examining these cards, Essper, to his horror and surprise, detected they were marked. The system on which the marks are formed and understood, is so simple and novel, that it was long before I could bring myself to believe that his suspicions were founded even on a probability. At length, however, he convinced me. It is at Vienna, he tells me, that he has met with these cards before; or with some marked, if not on the same, certainly on a similar principle. The marks are all on the rim of the cards; and an experienced dealer, that is to say, a black-leg, can with these marks produce any results and combinations which may suit his purpose. Essper tells me that De Boeffeurs is even more skilled in slight of hand than himself. From Ernstorff Essper learned on the day of the fête, that Mr. St. George was to dine with the chevalier at the baron's apartments on the morrow, and that there was a chance that I should join them. He suspected that villany was in the wind, and when I retired to my room, at a late hour on the night of the fête, I there met him, and it was then that he revealed to me every thing which I have told you. Am I not right, then, in calling him our preserver?"

"What can be done for him?" said Lady Madeleine.

"His only wish is already granted; he is my servant. That he will serve me diligently, and faithfully, I have no doubt. I only wish that he would accept, or could appreciate a more worthy reward."

"Can man be more amply rewarded," said Miss Fane, "than by choosing his own remuneration? I think he has shown in his request, his accustomed talent. I must go and see him this moment."

"Say nothing of what has passed, he is prepared for silence from all parties."

A week, a happy week passed over, and few minutes of the day found Vivian absent from the side of Violet Fane; and now he thought again of England, of his return to that country under very different circumstances to what he had ever contemplated. Soon, very soon, he trusted to write to his father, to announce to him the revolution in his wishes, the consummation of his hopes. Soon, very soon, he trusted that he should hail his native cliffs, a reclaimed wanderer, with a matured mind, and a contented spirit; his sorrows forgotten, his misanthropy laid aside.

CHAPTER XV.

It was about a week after the departure of the baron, that two young Englishmen, who had been college friends of Mr. St. George, arrived at the baths. These were Mr. Anthony St. Leger, and Mr. Adolphus St. John. In the academic shades

of Christ Church, these three gentlemen had, when youths, succeeded, to the admiring envy of all under graduates, and to the heavy cost both of their purses and their constitutions, in a faint imitation of the second-rate debauchery of a metropolis. At Oxford, that venerable nurse of wit and humour, —where fun, like their sermons, though orthodox, is rather dull,—a really facetious fellow of New College had dubbed these infant libertines "All Saints." Among their youthful companions they bore the more martial style of "The Three Companions," St. George, St. John, and St. Anthony.

St. John and St. Anthony had just completed the grand tour; and after passing the Easter at Rome, had returned through the Tyrol from Italy. Since then they had travelled over most parts of Germany; and now, in the beginning of July, found themselves at the Baths of Ems. Two years' travel had not produced any very beneficial effect on either of these sainted personages. They left the university with empty heads and vitiated minds. A season in London introduced them to the life of which they had previously only read and heard in the accounts of lying novels and the boastings of worn-out rousés; and they felt a disgust at their college career, only because they could now compare their former crude dissipation with the resources of the most miraculous of modern cities. Travelling, as they had done, with minds utterly incapable either of observation or reflection, they had gained by visiting the capitals of all Europe, only a due acquaintance with the vices of each; and the only difference that could be observed in their conduct on their return, was, that their affectation was rather more disgusting, because it was more obtrusive. What capital companions for old Sherborne!

"Corpo di Bacco! my champion, who ever thought of meeting thee, thou holy saint! By the eyebrow of Venus, my spirit rejoiceth!" exclaimed St. Anthony, whose peculiar affectation was an adoption in English of the Italian *colta*.

"This is the sweetest spot, St. Anthony, that we have found since we left Paradiso; that is St. George, in the vulgar tongue, since we quitted Italia. 'Italia! O, Italia!'—I forget the rest, probably you remember it. Certainly a most sweet spot this, quite a Gaspar."

Art was the peculiar affectation of St. John; he was, indeed, quite a patron of the *belle Arti*—had scattered his orders through the studios of the most celebrated sculptors of Italy, and spoke on all subjects and all things, only with a view to their capability of forming *matériel* for the painter. According to the school of which Mr. St. John was an humble disciple, the only use of the human passions is, that they produce *situations* for the historical painter; and nature, according to these votaries of the *τὸ καλόν*, is only to be valued as affording hints for the more perfect conceptions of a Claude or a Salvator.

"By the girdle of Venus, a devilish fine woman!" exclaimed St. Anthony.

"A splendid bit!" ejaculated St. John: "washed in with freedom—a grand *tournure*—great *goût* in the swell of the neck. What a study for Retach!"

"In the name of the graces, who is it, mio Santo!"

"Ay! name, name *la bellissima signora*."

"The 'fine bit,' St. John, is my sister."

"The devil!"

"*Diavolo!*"

"Will you introduce us, most holy man?"

This request from both, simultaneously arranging their mustachios.

The two saints were accordingly, in due time, introduced; but finding the attention of Violet and the always engrossed, and receiving some not very encouraging responses from Lady Madeleine, they voted her ladyship curiously satirical; and issuing a general censure on the annoying coldness of English women, they were in four-and-twenty hours attached to the suite of the Miss Fitzlooms, to whom they were introduced by St. George as his most particular friends, and were received with the most flattering consideration.

"By the aspect of Diana! fine girls, and some good in them!" swore St. Anthony.

"Truly, most gorgeous colouring! quite Venetian! Aurelia is a perfect Giorgione!" said St. John.

"Madeleine," said St. George, one morning to his sister; "have you any objection to make up a party with the Fitzlooms to pass a day at Nassau?—You know we have often talked of it; and as Violet is so well now, and the weather so delightful, there surely can be no objection. The Fitzlooms are very agreeable people; and though you don't admire the Santi, still, upon my word, when you know them a little more, you'll find them very pleasant fellows; and they're extremely good-natured; and just the fellows for such a party; and I'll take care that they don't slang Mr. Sherborne, hom, by-the-by, Mr. St. John very much admires. He says he'd make a grand head for Ludovico Aracchi—something very Bolognese in the gray nuts of his forehead. Do not give me a refusal! I've set my mind upon your joining the party. I may not assent—thank you—thank you. Now must go and arrange every thing. Let's see—there are seven Fitzlooms; for we can't count on less than two horrid boys; yourself, Mr. Sherborne, my dear, Violet, and myself, five—the Santi—quite rough—quite enough—a most delightful party. Half a dozen servants, and as many donkeys, will manage the provisions. Then three light carriages will take us all. By the wand of Mercury, as St. Anthony would vow, most admirably planned."

"By the breath of Zephyr! a most lovely day, Miss Fane," said St. Anthony, on the morning of the intended excursion.

"Quite a Claude!" said St. John.

"Almost as beautiful as an Italian winter's day, Mr. St. Leger!" asked Miss Fane.

"Hardly! hardly!" said St. Anthony, with a serious air; for he imagined the question to be quite genuine.

"Lady Madeleine, I cannot take my eyes off that venerable countenance!" said St. John, speaking of Mr. Sherborne. "There are some flesh-tints on the higher cheek, which almost make me fancy myself in the gallery at Bologna. He doesn't rouge now, does he? You may speak perfectly in confidence. I assure your ladyship that nothing shall transpire; only I'm very curious to know; such tints I never saw before!"

"Really, Mr. St. John," said her ladyship, smiling; "I regret very much that I am not initiated in the mysteries of Mr. Sherborne's toilet; but my uncle is a very candid man, and I have no doubt he will confess in a minute if he's guilty of making up; suppose you ask him."

"Why, no; at his age, people of his country have odd prejudices. He may not make up; and he might feel a little offended. To say the truth, I think it is *au naturel*. There is a gray tint under the eye, which I don't think that any modern colours could have produced—perfectly Ludovico, perfectly. If he do make up, I should like very much to know where he gets his colour: that's a secret, Lady Madeleine, which seems to be lost forever. I was talking the other day to Benvenuti, the great Florentine painter, about that very point:—'Benvenuti,' said I—a very gentlemanly man is Benvenuti. It has often struck me, I don't know whether it has your ladyship—probably it may have; that all men of genius are very gentlemanly. For instance, take all the artists of ancient and modern times. We know very little of Apelles; yet we do know that he was the intimate friend of Alexander the Great: and all painters who are intimate friends of crowned heads, and who are in the habit of going to court, are, I have remarked, very gentlemanly. Now, for instance, can you possibly meet with a more gentlemanly man than Sir Thomas Lawrence? and Benvenuti, too, as I said before, Benvenuti is a very gentlemanly man. I was saying to him one day, as I mentioned—'*Cavaliero!*'—for I need not tell your ladyship that the great artist has the honour of being a Knight of—"

"Thrice holy man!" hallooed out St. Anthony to St. John;—"thrice holy man! the champion wishes to know whether you have arranged about the malvoisie. Miss Fane has decided for the malvoisie. By the body of Bacchus, a right good liquor!"

"Lady Madeleine, will you excuse the anecdote of Benvenuti at present?—the truth is, I am butler, and your charming conversation is making me, I fear, neglect my duties." So saying, ran off the saint.

The carriages are at the door; into the first ascended Mrs. Fitzloom, two daughters, and the travelling saints. The second bore Lady Madeleine, Mr. Fitzloom, and his two sons; the third division was commanded by Mr. Sherborne, and was formed of St. George and Aurelia Fitzloom, Miss Fane, and Vivian.

Away, away rolled the carriages, the day was beautiful, the sky was without a cloud, and a mild breeze prevented the heat of the sun from being overpowering. All were in high spirits; for St. George had made a capital master of the ceremonies, and had arranged the company in the carriages to their mutual satisfaction. St. Anthony swore, by the soul of Psyche! that Augustus Fitzloom was an angel; and St. John was in equal raptures with Araminta, who had an expression about the eyes which reminded him of Titian's Flora. Mrs. Fitzloom's natural silence did not disturb the uninterrupted jargon of the Santi, whose affectation, slang, and foppishness, elicited loud and continued approbation from the fair sisters. The mother sat admiring these sprigs of noble trees. The young Fitzlooms, in crimson cravats, conversed with Lady Madeleine with a delightful military air; and their happy parent, as he gazed upon them with satisfied affection, internally promised them both a commission in a crack regiment. Each of the boys already imagined that Lady Madeleine was in love with him; and her ladyship being convinced that all were happy, did not regret

the absence of those she really did love, but was amused; even Mr. Sherborne was contented, and did not complain. Had he been put in the same carriage with those fools, he really did not think that he should have been able to get on. It showed St. George's sense, making a different arrangement; and he must say, that though they did sometimes disagree, he had no right to complain of the general behaviour of St. George towards him. This was said with a bow to Miss Aurelia Fitzloom;—need I say that Violet and Vivian were satisfied with the arrangement?

The road from Ems to Nassau winds along the banks of the Lahn, through two leagues of most delightful scenery; at the end of which, springing up from the peak of a bold and richly wooded mountain, the lofty tower of the ancient castle of Nassau meets your view. Winding walks round the sides of the mountain, lead through all the varieties of sylvan scenery, and command in all points the most magnificent views of the surrounding country. These finally bring you to the old castle, whose spacious chambers, though now choked up with masses of gray ruin, or covered with underwood, still bear witness to the might of their former lord; the powerful baron whose sword gained for his posterity a throne. Here it was, by the massy keep, "all tenantless, save to the cranny wind," that Mr. Sherborne delivered to a youthful auditory, who, seated on the fragments of the ancient walls, rested after the toils of the ascent, the following lecture on Gothic architecture.

On second thoughts, I shall keep it for Mr. Colbourn's magazine. The Misses Fitzloom, with that vivid genius for which young unmarried ladies are celebrated, entered with the most delightful enthusiasm into all the interest of Mr. Sherborne's discourse. In a few minutes they perfectly understood all the agitated questions which had puzzled the architects of all ages, and each had her separate solution of mysteries which never can be solved. How delightful is this elegant and enraptured ignorance! How decisive is the opinion of a young lady who has studied architecture in the elevations of the Regent's Park, on the controversy of the round arch, and the pointed style! How exquisite their animated tattle about mullions, spandrels, and trefoils!

But Mr. Sherborne was delighted with his pupils, and all seemed happy; none happier than Violet Fane. Never did she look so beautiful as to-day—never were her spirits so animated—never had she boasted that her pulse beat more melodious music, nor her lively blood danced a more healthful measure. After examining all the antique chambers of the castle, and discovering, as they flattered themselves, secret passages, and dark dungeons, and hidden doors, they left this interesting relic of the middle ages; and soon, by a gradual descent through the most delightful shrubberies, they again found themselves at the bottom of the valley. Here they visited the modern chateau of Baron von Stein, one of the most enlightened and able politicians that Germany has ever produced. As Minister of Prussia, he commenced those reforms which the illustrious Hardenberg perfected. For upwards of five centuries the family of Stein have retained their territorial possessions in the valley of the Lahn. Their family castle, at present a ruin, and formerly a fief of the house of Nassau, is now

only a picturesque object in the pleasure-grounds of the present lord.

The noon had passed some hours, before the delighted wanderers complained of fatigue, and by that time they found themselves in a pleasant green glade on the skirts of the forest of Nassau. It was nearly environed by mountains, covered with hanging woods, which shaded the beautiful valley, and gave it the appearance of a sylvan amphitheatre. From a rocky cleft in these green mountains, a torrent, dashing down with impetuous force, and whose fall was almost concealed by the cloud of spray which it excited, gave birth to a small and gentle river; whose banks were fringed with the most beautiful trees, which prevented the sun's darts from piercing its coldness, by bowing their fair heads over its waters. From their extending branches, Nature's choristers sent forth many a lovely lay,

"Of God's high praise, and of their loves' sweet teen."

Near the banks of this river, the servants, under the direction of Esaper George, had prepared some refreshments for the party. The cloth had been laid with great neatness on a raised work of wood and turf; and rustic seats of the same material surrounded the rude table. All kinds of cold meats, and all kinds of pasties, venison, pheasants, plovers, rabbits, pickled fish, prawns, and craw fish, greeted the ravished eyes of the wearied band of foresters. July is not a month for eating; but, nevertheless, in Germany, we are somewhat consoled for the want of the curious varieties of cookery, by the exhilarating presence of white young partridges, delicious ducklings, and most tender leverets. Then there were all sorts of forced meats, and stuffed birds. You commenced with a pompous display of unnecessary science, to extract for a famished fair one the wing and merry-thought of a fairer chicken—when lo, and behold! the facile knife sunk without an effort into the plump breast, and the unremitting bird discharged a cargo of rich stuffed balls, of the most fascinating flavour. Then July, above all, is the season for fruits; and though few of the Rhenish grapes were yet ripe, still money had procured some plates of the red and rich Asmanhausens; and the refreshing strawberry, the luscious peach, the grateful apricot, the thrilling nectarine, and above all, the peerless pine-apple were not wanting. Shall I forget the piquant currant, and the mellow gooseberry? Pomona forbid! Humble fruits, I love you, and once loved you more!

"Well!" said Violet Fane, "I never will be a member of an adventurous party like the present, of which St. George is not manager: this is admirable!"

"I must not take the whole credit upon myself, Violet; St. John is butler, and St. Leger my vice-chamberlain."

"Well, I can't praise Mr. St. John, till I've tasted the malvoisie which he has promised; but as for the other part of the entertainment, Mr. St. Leger, I'm sure this is a temptation which it would be a sin even in St. Anthony to withstand."

"By the body of Bacchus, very good!" swore Mr. St. Leger.

"These mountains," said Mr. St. John, "remind me of one of Nicolo Poussin's cool valleys. The party, indeed, give it a different character—quite a Watteau!"

Fitzloom," said St. George, who is element, "let me recommend a ce! Lady Madeleine, I've sent you Miss Fitzloom, I hope St. Anthony of you. Wrightson! plates to Mr. ly man, and much beloved! send . Sherborne. Araminta, some pou- helped you, Violet? Aurelia, my tridge? William Pitt Fitzloom, I urself. George Canning Fitzloom, e ladies near you. Esaper George! er George? St. John, who is your wine department?—Wrightson! g green bottles out of the river, and agne underneath the willow. Will take some light claret? Mrs. Fitz- st use your tumbler; nothing but ed, by Miss Fane's particular re-

"thou holy man!" said Miss Fane, are very impertinent. You shall on saint, if you go on so." hour there was nothing heard save servants; the rattling of knives and ving of corks; and continued bursts hich were not occasioned by any ations, either of the saints, or any but merely the result of an exube- on the part of every one present. e of St. Anthony was heard.

"Come, will you wine?" "I't understand you," answered the A cloud was on his brow.

My uncle from exploding, Mr. Grey! ke, put out his passion. If he do liquid immediately, I'm sure he must ge. Holy St. Anthony has been

"Uncle! Mr. Sherborne! Mr. St. o know whether he may have the ng wine with you. You don't seem him."

"nobody else." onhotonthologos seems as crusty as own undrinkable port," whispered Miss Fitzloom, who was delighted ant sally. "I wonder what's the bring old uncles!" Miss Fitzloom ore at a remark which was still

cent study, that old uncle of St. ispered St. John to Araminta. "I get him to sit. I dare say there's il of an artist at the baths, who'd very prettily with black chalk. I old man. Let me give you a little "

elia!" said Lady Madeleine, "do present mode of life to feasting in overed with banners and battered rrouded by mysterious corridors ons?" Aurelia was so flattered by ady Madeleine, that she made her obably because she was intent on a

might all retire to this valley," said nd revive the old feudal times with St. George might take us to Nassau u, Mr. Fitzloom, might reformat the in. With two sons, however, who iter the Guards, I'm afraid we must . Then what should we do? We

couldn't have wood parties every day; I suppose we should get tired of each other. No! that does seem impossible; don't you all think so?"

Omnes—"Impossible, impossible!"

"We must, however, have some regular pursuit, some cause of constant excitement, some perpetual source of new emotions. New ideas, of course, we must give up; there would be no going to London for the season for new opinions to astound country cousins on our return. Some pursuit must be invented; we all must have something to do. I have it, I have it! St. George shall be a tyrant!"

"I'm very much obliged to you, Violet."

"Yes! a bloody, unprincipled, vindictive, remorseless tyrant, with a long black beard; I can't tell how long! about twenty thousand times longer than Mr. St. Leger's mustachios."

"By the beard of Jove!" swore St. Anthony, as he started from his seat, and arranged with his thumb and forefinger the delicate Albanian tuft of his upper lip; "By the beard of Jove, Miss Fane, I'm obliged to you!"

"Well then," continued Violet, "St. George being a tyrant, Lady Madeleine must be an unhappy, ill-used, persecuted woman!"

"Now, Violet, my dear! do be calm, do restrain yourself!"

"An unhappy, ill-used, persecuted woman, living on black bread and green water, in an unknown dungeon. My part shall be to discover her imprisonment. Sounds of strange music attract my attention to a part of the castle which I have not before frequented. There I shall distinctly hear a female voice chanting the 'Bridesmaid's Chorus,' with Erard's double pedal accompaniment. By the aid of the confessors of the two families—two drinking, rattling, impertinent, most corrupt, and most amusing friars: to wit—our sainted friends—"

Here both Mr. St. Leger and Mr. St. John bowed low to Miss Fane.

"A most lively personage is Miss Fane," whispered St. Anthony to his neighbour Miss Fitzloom,—"great style!"

"Most amusing, delightful girl—great style—rather a display to-day, I think."

"O, decidedly! and devilish personal too—devilish; some people wouldn't like it. I've no doubt she'll say something about you next."

"O! I shall be very surprised, indeed, if she does, very surprised indeed! It may be very well to you, but Miss Fane must be aware—"

Before this pompous sentence could be finished, an incident occurred which prevented Miss Fane from proceeding with her allotment of characters, and rendered unnecessary the threatened indignation of Miss Fitzloom.

Miss Fane, as we mentioned, suddenly ceased speaking; the eyes of all were turned in the direction in which she was gazing—gazing as if she had seen a ghost.

"What are you looking up at, Violet?" asked St. George.

"Didn't you see any thing? didn't any of you see any thing?"

"None—none—none!"

"Mr. Grey, surely you must have seen it!"

"No; I saw nothing."

"It could not be fancy—impossible! I saw it distinctly. I cannot be in a dream. See there!"

there again, on that topmost branch. See! see! it moves!"

Some odd shrill sounds, uttered in the voice of a Pulcinello, attracted the notice of them all, and lo! high in the air, behind a lofty chestnut tree, the figure of a Pulcinello did appear, hopping and vaulting in the unsubstantial air. Now it sent forth another shrill piercing sound, and now, with both its hands, it patted and complacently stroked its ample paunch; dancing all the time, with unremitting activity, and wagging its queer head at the astounded guests.

"Who, what can it be?" cried all. The Misses Fitzloom shrieked, and the Santi seemed quite puzzled.

"Who, what can it be?"

Ere time could be given for any one to hazard a conjecture, the figure had advanced from behind the trees, and had spanned in an instant the festal board, with two enormous stilts, on which they now perceived it was mounted. The Misses Fitzloom shrieked again. The figure imitated their cries in his queer voice, and gradually raising one enormous stilt up into the air, stood only on one support, which was planted behind the lovely Araminta.

"O! inimitable Esser George!" exclaimed Violet Fane.

Here Signor Punch commenced a *chanson*, which he executed in the tone peculiar to his character, and in a style which drew applauses from all; and then, with a hop, step, and a jump, he was again behind the chestnut tree. In a moment he advanced without his stilts, towards the table. Here, on the turf, he again commenced his antics; kicking his nose with his right foot, and his hump with his left one; executing the most splendid somersets, and cutting all species of capers: and never ceasing for a moment from performing all his movements to the inspiring music of his own melodious voice. At last, jumping up immensely high in the air, he fell as if all his joints were loosened, and the Misses Fitzloom, imagining that his bones were really broken, shrieked again. But now Esser began the wonderful performance of a dead body possessed by a devil; and in a minute his shattered corpse, apparently without the assistance of any of its members, began to jump, and move about the ground with the most miraculous rapidity. At length it disappeared behind the chestnut tree.

"Grey!" said St. George; "we owe all this timely entertainment to you. I really think it is the most agreeable day I ever passed in all my life."

"O, decidedly!" said St. Anthony. "St. John, you remember our party to Pæstum with Lady Calabria McCrater, and the Marquis of Agrigentum. It was nothing to this! Nothing! nothing! Do you know I thought that rather dull."

"Yes, dull, dull; too elaborate; too highly finished; nothing of the *pittura improvisature*. A party of this kind should be more sketchy in its style; the outline more free, and less detail."

"This is all very well for you, young folks," said Mr. Sherborne, "and Esser is certainly a clever knave; but my dear young friends, if you had had the good fortune of living fifty years ago, when the first Scaramouch that I remember appeared in London, then you might have laughed. As it is, this is all very well of Esser; but—"

Here Mr. Sherborne jumped on his chair, and suddenly stopped. A great green monkey was seated opposite to him, imitating with ludicrous fidelity his energetic action. The laugh was universal. The monkey, with one bound, jumped over Mr. Sherborne's head, and disappeared.

"Esser is coming out to-day," said Vivian to Miss Fane, "after a long, and I venture to say, painful forbearance. However, I hope you'll excuse him. It seems to amuse us."

"Amuse us! I think it's delightful. See! here he comes again."

He now appeared in his original costume; the one in which Vivian first met him at the fair. Bowing very respectfully to the company, he threw his hand carelessly over his mandolin, and having tried the melody of its strings, sang with great taste, and a sweet voice—sweeter, from its contrast with its previous shrill tones,—a very pretty romance. All applauded him very warmly, and no one more so than Violet Fane.

"Ah! inimitable Esser George, how can we sufficiently thank you! How admirably he plays! and his voice is quite beautiful. O! couldn't we dance! wouldn't it be delightful; and he could play on his guitar. Think of the delicious turf!"

Omnes—"Delightful! delightful! delightful!" they rose from table.

"Violet, my dear," asked Lady Madeleine, "what are you going to do?"

"By the toe of Terpsichore! as Mr. St. Leger would say, I am going to dance."

"But remember, dearest, to-day you have done so much!—let us be wise—let us be moderate; though you feel so much better, still think what a change to-day has been from your usual habits!"

"But, dearest Lady Madeleine, think of dancing on the turf, and I feel so well—so—"

"O! let the dear creature dance if she likes," said Mr. Sherborne: "my opinion is, that dancing never does a young woman any harm. Who you'll get to dance with you, though," turning to the Misses Fitzloom, "I can't tell; as to what the young men of the present day call dancing—"

"By the Graces! I am for the waltz," said St. Anthony.

"It certainly has a very free touch to recommend it," said St. John.

"No, no," said Violet; "let us all join in a country dance. Mr. Sherborne, shall I introduce you to a partner?"

"Ah! you little angel," said the delighted old man; "you look just like your dear mother, that you do!"

"We staid old personages do not dance," said Lady Madeleine; "and therefore, I recommend you a quadrille."

The quadrille was soon formed: Violet made up for not dancing with Vivian at the archduke's. She was in the most animated spirits, and kept up a successful rivalry with Mr. St. Leger, who evidently prided himself, as Mr. Fitzloom observed, "on his light fantastic toe." Now he pirouetted like Paul, and now he attitudinized like Albert; and now Violet Fane eclipsed all his exertions by her inimitable imitations of Ronzi Vestris's rushing and arrowy manner. St. Anthony, in despair, but quite delighted, revealed a secret which had been taught him by a Spanish dancer at Milan; and then Violet Fane vanquished him forever, with the *pas de Zephyr* of the exquisite Fanny Elm.

The day was fast declining when the carriages rived; the young people were in no humour to turn; and as, when they had once entered the carriage, the day seemed finished forever, they proceeded walking part of the way home. Lady Madeleine made little objection to Violet joining the party, as she feared after the exertion that Miss Anne had been making, a drive in an open carriage would be dangerous; and yet the walk was so long, but all agreed that it would be impossible to shorten it; and, as Violet declared that she was not the least fatigued, the lesser evil was therefore chosen. The carriages rolled off; at about half-way from home, the two empty ones were to wait for the walking party. Lady Madeleine smiled with fond affection, as she waved her hand to Violet the moment before she was out of sight.

"And now," said St. George; "good people all, instead of returning by the same road, it strikes me, that there must be a way through this little wood—you see there is an excellent path. Before the sun has set, we shall have got through it, and will bring us out, I have no doubt, by the old stage which you observed, Grey, when we came along; I saw a gate and path there—just where we last got sight of Nassau castle—there can be no doubt about it. You see it's a regular right-angle, and besides varying the walk, we shall at least gain a quarter of an hour, which, after all, as we have to walk near three miles, is an object. It's quite clear—quite clear: If I've a head for anything, it's for finding my way."

"I think you've a head for every thing," said Aurelia Fitzbloom, in a soft sentimental whisper; "I'm sure we owe all our happiness to-day to you."

"If I have a head for every thing, I have a heart only for one person!"

As every one wished to be convinced, no one offered any argument in opposition to St. George's view of the case; and some were already in the wood.

"St. George, St. George," said Violet Fane, "I can't like walking in the wood so late; pray come back."

"O, nonsense, Violet!—come, come. If you can't like to come you can walk by the road—we'll meet us round by the gate—it's only five minutes walk." Ere he had finished speaking, the rest were in the wood, and some had advanced. Vivian strongly recommended Violet not to join them; he was sure that Lady Madeleine would not approve it—he was sure that it was very dangerous; and, by-the-by, while he was talking, which they had they gone! he didn't see them. He halted—no one answered—and fifty thousand echoes replied. "We certainly had better go by the road—we shall lose our way if we try to follow them; nothing is so puzzling as walking in woods—we had much better keep to the road." So by the road they went.

The sun had already sunk behind the mountains, those undulating forms were thrown into dark shadow against the crimson sky. The thin crescent of the new moon floated over the eastern hills, whose deep woods glowed with the rosy glories of twilight. Over the peak of a purple mountain, glittered the solitary star of evening. As the sun dropped, universal silence seemed to pervade the whole face of nature. The voice of the birds was stilled; the breeze, which had refreshed them during the day, died away, as if its office were now completed; and none of the dark sounds and

sights of hideous night yet dared to triumph over the death of day. Unseen were the circling wings of the fell bat; unheard the screech of the waking owl; silent the drowsy hum of the shade-born beetle! What heart has not acknowledged the influence of this hour—the sweet and soothing hour of twilight;—the hour of love, the hour of adoration, the hour of rest!—when we think of those we love, only to regret that we have not loved more dearly; when we remember our enemies only to forgive them!

And Vivian and his beautiful companion owned the magic of this hour, as all must do—by silence. No word was spoken, yet in silence sometimes a language. They gazed, and gazed again, and their full spirits held due communion with the star-lit sky, and the mountains, and the woods, and the soft shadows of the increasing moon. O! who can describe what the overcharged spirit feels at this sacred hour, when we almost lose the consciousness of existence, and our souls seem to struggle to pierce futurity! In the forest of the mysterious Odenwald, in the solitude of the Bergstrasse, had Vivian at this hour often found consolation for a bruised spirit—often in adoring nature had forgotten man. But now, when he had never felt nature's influence more powerful; when he had never forgotten man, and man's world more thoroughly; when he was experiencing emotions, which, though undefinable, he felt to be new; he started when he remembered that all this was in the presence of a human being! Was it Hesperus he gazed upon, or something else that glanced brighter than an evening star? Even as he thought that his gaze was fixed on the countenance of nature, he found that his eyes rested on the face of nature's loveliest daughter!

"Violet! dearest Violet!"

As in some delicious dream, the sleeper is awakened from his bliss by the sound of his own rapturous voice; so was Vivian roused by these words from his reverie, and called back to the world which he had forgotten. But ere a moment had passed, he was pouring forth in a rapid voice, and incoherent manner, such words as men speak only once. He spoke of his early follies—his misfortunes—his misery—of his matured views—his settled principles—his plans—his prospects—his hopes—his happiness—his bliss: and when he had ceased, he listened in his turn, to some small still words, which made him the happiest of human beings. He bent down—he kissed the soft silken cheek which now he could call his own. Her hand was in his; her head sank upon his breast. Suddenly she clung to him with a strong grasp. "Violet! my own, my dearest; you are overcome. I have been rash, I have been imprudent. Speak, speak, my beloved! say you are not ill!"

She spoke not, but clung to him with a fearful strength—her head still upon his breast—her full eyes closed. In the greatest alarm he raised her off the ground, and bore her to the river-side. Water might revive her. But when he tried to lay her a moment on the bank, she clung to him, gasping, as a sinking person clings to a stout swimmer. He leaned over her; he did not attempt to disengage his arms; and, by degrees, by very slow degrees, her grasp loosened. At last her arms gave way and fell by her side, and her eyes partly opened.

"Thank God! thank God! Violet, my own, my beloved, say you are better!"

She answered not—evidently she did not know him—evidently she did not see him. A film was on her sight and her eye was glassy. He rushed to the water-side, and in a moment he had sprinkled her temples, now covered with a cold dew. Her pulse beat not—her circulation seemed suspended. He rubbed the palms of her hands—he covered her delicate feet with his coat; and then rushing up the bank into the road, he shouted with frantic cries on all sides. No one came, no one was near. Again, with a cry of fearful anguish, he shouted as if a hyena were feeding on his vitals. No sound—no answer. The nearest cottage he remembered was above a mile off. He dared not leave her. Again he rushed down to the water-side. Her eyes were still open, still fixed. Her mouth also was no longer closed. Her hand was stiff—her heart had ceased to beat. He tried with the warmth of his own body to revive her. He shouted—he wept—he prayed. All, all in vain. Again he was in the road—again shouting like an insane being. There was a sound. Hark!—It was but the screech of an owl!

Once more at the river-side—once more bending over her with starting eyes—once more the attentive ear listening for the soundless breath. No sound! not even a sigh! O! what would he have given for her shriek of anguish!—No change had occurred in her position, but the lower part of her face had fallen; and there was a general appearance which struck him with awe. Her body was quite cold:—her limbs stiffened. He gazed, and gazed, and gazed. He bent over her with stupor, rather than grief, stamped on his features. It was very slowly that the dark thought came over his mind—very slowly that the horrible truth seized upon his soul. He gave a loud shriek, and fell on the lifeless body of VIOLET FANE!

BOOK THE SIXTH.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE green and bowery summer had passed away. It was midnight, when two horsemen pulled up their steeds beneath a wide oak; which, with other lofty trees, skirted the side of a winding road in an extensive forest in the south of Germany.

"By heavens!" said one, who apparently was the master—"we must even lay our cloaks, I think, under this oak; for the road winds again, and assuredly cannot lead now to our village."

"A star-lit sky in autumn, can scarcely be the fittest curtain for one so weak as your highness. I should recommend travelling on, if we keep on our horses' backs till dawn."

"But if we are travelling in a directly contrary way to our voiturier—honest as we may suppose him to be, if he find in the morning no paymaster for his job, he may with justice make free with our baggage. And I shall be unusually mistaken if the road we are now pursuing does not lead back to the city."

"City, town, or village, your highness must sleep under no forest tree. Let us ride on. It will be hard if we do not find some huntsman's or ranger's cottage; and for aught we know a neat snug village—or some comfortable old manor-

house, which has been in the family for two centuries; and where, with God's blessing, they may chance to have wine as old as the bricks. I know not how your highness may feel, but a ten hour ride when I was only prepared for half the time, and that too in an autumn night, makes me somewhat desirous of renewing my acquaintance with the kitchen-fire."

"I could join you in a glass of hock and a slice of venison, I confess, my good fellow; but in a nocturnal ride I am no longer your match. However, if you think it best, we'll prick on our steeds for another hour. If it be only for them, I'm sure we must soon stop."

"Ay! Jo, sir; and put your cloak well round you—all is for the best. Your highness, I guess, is no Sabbath-born child!"

"That am I not—but how would that make our plight worse than it is? Should we be further of supper?"

"Nearer—nearer perhaps than you imagine; for we should then have a chance of sharing the spoils of the Spirit Hunter."

"Ah! Essper, is it so?"

"Truly, yes, sir; and were either of us a Sabbath-born child, by holy cross! I would not give much for our chance of a down bed this night."

Here a great horned owl flew across the road.

"Were I in the North," said Essper, "I would sing an Ave Mary against the STUR OAK."

"What call you that?" asked Vivian.

"'Tis the great bird, sir; the great horned owl, that always flies before the Wild Hunter. And truly, sir, I have passed through many forests in my time, but never yet saw I one where I should sooner expect to hear a midnight bugle. If you'll allow me, sir, I'll ride by your side. Thank God, at least, it's not the Walpurgis night!"

"I wish to heaven it were!" said Vivian, "and that we were at the Brocken. It must be highly amusing!"

"Hush! hush! hush! it's lucky we're not in the Hartz—but we know not where we are, nor what at this moment may be behind us."

And here Essper began pouring forth a litany of his own—half Catholic, and half Calvinistic, quite in character with the creed of the country which they were travelling.

"My horse has stumbled," continued Essper, "and yours, sir, is he not shying? There's a confounded cloud over the moon—but I've no sight in the dark if that mass before you be not a devil's-stone. The Lord have mercy upon our sinful souls!"

"Peace! peace! Essper," said Vivian, who was surprised to find him really alarmed; "peace! peace! I see nothing but a block of granite, no uncommon sight in a German forest."

"It is a devil-stone, I tell you, sir—there has been some church here, which he has knocked down in the night. Look! look! is it the moss-people that I see! As sure as I am a hungry sinner, the Wild One is out a hunting to-night."

"More luck for us if we meet him. His dogs, as you says, may gain us a supper. I think our wisest course will be to join the cry."

"Hush! hush! hush! your highness would not talk so if you knew what your share of the spoils might be. Ay! if your highness did, your cheek would be paler, and your very teeth would chatter. I knew one man who was travelling a

forest, just as we are now, it was about this noon, and he believed in the Wild Huntsman about as much as your highness does—that is, he liked talk of the spirit, merely to have the opportunity of denying that he believed in him; which I owed, as I used to say, that his mind was often inking of it. He was a merry knave, and as I had a hand for a boar-spear as ever I met with, and I've met with many. We used to call him, before the accident, *Left-handed Hans*, but they call him now, your highness, *the Child-hunter*. I think it's a very awful tale, your highness, and I'd sooner tell it in blazing hall than in free forest. Your highness didn't hear any sound to the left, did you?"

"Nothing but the wind, Espeer; on with your le. my man."

"It's a very awful tale, sir, but I'll make short work of it. You see, your highness, it was a night just like this; the moon was generally hid, and the stars prevented it from ever being pitch dark. And so, sir, he was travelling alone; he'd been up to the castle of the baron, his master—you see, sir, he was head-ranger to his lordship—and he always returned home through the forest. What he was thinking of, I cannot say, but most likely of no good; when all on a sudden he heard the baying of hounds in the distance. Now, your highness, directly he heard it—I've heard him tell the story a thousand times—directly he heard it, it struck him that it must be the Spirit Huntsman; and though there were many ways to account for the hounds, still he never for a moment doubted that they were the hell-dogs. The sounds came nearer and nearer. Now, your highness, I tell you this, because if ever,—which the Holy Virgin forbid!—if ever you meet the Wild Huntsman, you'll know how to act:—conduct yourself always with propriety, make no noise, but behave like a gentleman, and don't put the dogs off the scent; stand aside and let him pass. Don't talk, he has no time to lose, for if he hunt after a break, a night's sport is forfeited for every star that falls in the morning sky. So, sir, you see nothing but him in a greater passion than to lose his time in answering impertinent questions. Well, your highness, *Left-handed Hans* stood by the road-side. The baying of the dogs was so distinct, that he felt that in a moment the Wild One would be upon his horse shivered like a saw in a storm. He heard the tramp of the spirit-steed: they came in sight. As the tall figure of the Huntsman passed—I cannot tell your highness what it was—it might have been, Lord forgive me in thinking what it might have been! but a voice from behind him, a voice so like his own, that for a moment he fancied that he had himself spoken, although he was conscious that his lips had been firmly closed the whole time, a voice from the road side,—just behind poor Hans, mind,—said, 'Good sport, Sir Huntsman, 'tis an odd light to track a stag!' The poor man, sir, was all of an ague; but how much reater, your highness, was his horror, when the Wild Huntsman stopped! He thought that he was going to be eaten up on the spot, at least: not at all, your highness—'My friend!' said the Wild One, in the kindest voice imaginable; 'my friend, would you like to give your horse a breathing with us?' Poor Hans, your highness, was so alarmed, that it never entered into his head for a single moment to refuse the invitation, and instantly he was

galloping by the side of the Wild Huntsman. Away they flew! away! away! over bog, and over mere; over ditch, and over hedge; away! away! away!—and the ranger's horse never failed, but kept by the side of the wild spirit without the least distress; and yet, your highness, it's very singular that Hans was about to sell this very beast only a day before, for a matter of five crowns:—you see, your highness, he only kept it just to pick his way at night from the castle to his own cottage. Well! your highness, it's very odd, but Hans soon lost all fear, for the sport was so fine, and he had such a keen relish for the work, that far from being alarmed, he thought himself one of the luckiest knaves alive. But the oddest thing all this time was, that Hans never caught sight for one moment of either buck or boar; although he saw by the dogs' noses, that there was something keen in the wind; and although he felt that if the hunted beast were like any that he had himself ever followed before, it must have been run down with such dogs, quicker than a priest could say a paternoster. At last, sir, for he had grown quite bold, says Hans to the Wild Huntsman, 'The beasts run quick o' nights, sir, I think; it's been a long time, I ween, e'er I scampered so far, and saw so little!' Do you know, your highness, that the old gentleman was not the least affronted, but said, in the pleasantest voice imaginable, 'A true huntsman should be patient, Hans, you'll see the game quick enough; look forward, man! what see you?' and sure enough, your highness, he did look forward. It was near the skirts of the forest, there was a green glade before them, and very few trees, and therefore he could see far ahead. The moon was shining very bright, and sure enough, what did he see? Running as fleet over the turf as a rabbit, was a child. The little figure was quite black in the moonlight, and Hans could not catch its face;—in a moment the hell-dogs were on it. Hans quivered like a windy reed, your highness, and the Wild One laughed till the very woods echoed. 'How like you hunting mossmen?' asked the spirit. Now when Hans, your highness, found it was only a mossman, he took heart again, and said in a shaking voice, that 'It is rare good sport in good company;' and then the spirit jumped off his horse, and said, 'Now, Hans, you must watch me well, for I'm little used to bag game.' He said this with a proudish air, your highness, as much as to hint, that hadn't he expected Hans, he wouldn't have rode out this evening without his groom. So the Wild One jumped on his horse again, and put the bag before him. It was nearly morning, your highness, when Hans found himself at the door of his own cottage; and bowing very respectfully to the Spirit Hunter, he thanked him for the sport, and begged his share of the night's spoil. This was all in a joke, your highness, but Hans had heard that, 'talk to the devil, and fear the last word;' and so he was determined, now that they were about to part, not to appear to tremble, but to carry it off with a jest. 'Truly, Hans,' said the Huntsman, 'thou art a bold lad, and to encourage thee to speak to wild huntmen again, I have a mind to give thee for thy pains, the whole spoil. Take the bag, knave, a mossman is good eating, had I time I would give thee a receipt for sauce;' and so saying, the spirit rode off, laughing very heartily. Well, your highness, Hans was so anxious to examine the contents of the bag, and

see what kind of thing a mossman really was,—for he had only caught a glimpse of him in the chase,—that instead of going to bed immediately and saying his prayers, as he should have done, he lighted a lamp and untied the string; and what think you he took out of the bag, your highness? As sure as I'm a born sinner—his own child!"

"'Tis a wonderful tale," said Vivian; "and did the unfortunate man tell you this himself?"

"Often and often, sir.—I knew Left-handed Hans well. He was ranger, as I said, to a great lord; and was quite a favourite, you see. For some reason or other he got out of favour. Some said that the baron had found him out a poaching; and that he used to ride his master's horses a night. Whether this be true or not, who can say? But, howsoever, Hans went to ruin; and instead of being a flourishing, active lad, he was turned out, and went a begging all through Saxony; and he always told this story as the real history of his misfortunes. Some say, he's not as strong in his head as he used to be. However, why should we say it's not a true tale?—What's that?" almost shrieked Essper.

Vivian listened, and heard distinctly the distant baying of hounds.

"'Tis he! 'tis he!" said Essper; "now don't speak, sir, don't speak; and if the devil make me join him, as may be the case, for I'm but a cock-brained thing, particularly at midnight; don't be running after me from any foolish feeling, but take care of yourself, and don't be chattering. To think you should come to this, my precious young master!"

"Cease your blubbering, for heaven's sake! Do you think that I'm to be frightened by the idiot tales of a parcel of old women, and the lies of a gang of detected poachers? Come, sir, ride on. We are, most probably, near some huntsman's cottage. That distant baying is the sweetest music I've heard a great while."

"Don't be rash, sir—don't be rash—don't be rash. If you were to give me fifty crowns now, I couldn't remember a single line of a single prayer. Ave Maria!—it always is so when I most want it. Paternoster!—and whenever I've need to remember a song, sure enough I'm always thinking of a prayer.—Unser Vater, der du bist im himmel—sanctificado se el tu nombra; il tuo regno venga." Here Essper George was proceeding with a scrap of modern Greek, when the horsemen suddenly came upon one of those broad, green vistas which we often see in forests, and which are generally cut, either for the convenience of hunting, or carting wood. It opened on the left side of the road; and at the bottom of it, though apparently at a great distance, a light was visible.

"So much for your Wild Huntsman, my friend Essper! I shall be much disappointed if here are not quarters for the night. And see! the moon comes out—a good omen!"

After about ten minutes' sharp trot over the noiseless turf, the travellers found themselves before a large and many-windowed mansion. The building formed the farthest side of a quadrangle, which you entered through an ancient and massy gate; on each side of which was a small building—of course the lodges. Essper soon found that the gate was closely fastened; and though he knocked often and loudly, it was with no effect. That the inhabitants of the mansion had not yet retired was certain, for lights were moving in the

great house; and one of the lodges was not only very brilliantly illuminated, but full, as Vivian was soon convinced, of clamorous, if not jovial guests.

"Now, by the soul of my unknown father!" said the enraged Essper, "I'll make these sassy porters learn their duty. What ho! there—what ho! within! within!" But the only answer he received, was the loud reiteration of a rude and roaring chorus; which, as it was now more distinctly and audibly enunciated, evidently for the purpose of enraging the travellers—they detected to be something to the following effect:—

"Then a prayer to St. Peter, a prayer to St. Paul,
A prayer to St. Jerome—a prayer to them all—
A prayer to each one of the saintly stock,
But devotion alone, devotion to Hock!"

"A right good burden!" said Essper. The very words had made him recover his temper, and ten thousand times more desirous of gaining admittance. He was off his horse in a moment, and scrambling up the wall, with the aid of the iron stanchions, he clambered up to the window. The sudden appearance of his figure startled the inmates of the lodge;—and one of them soon staggered to the gate.

"What want you, ye noisy and disturbing vultures! what want you, ye most unhallowed rogues, at such a place, and at such an hour! If you be thieves—look at our bars—(here a hiccough.) If you be poachers—our master is engaged, and ye may slay all the game in the forest—(another hiccough)—but if ye be good men and true—"

"We are, we are!" hallooed Essper, eagerly.

"You are, you are!" said the porter, in a tone of great surprise; "then you ought to be ashamed of yourselves for disturbing holy men at their devotions!"

"Is this the way," said Essper, "to behave, ye shameless rascals, to a noble and mighty prince, who happens to have lost his way in one of your cursed forests; but who, though he has parted with his suite, has still in his pocket a purse full of de-cats? Would ye have him robbed by any other but yourselves! Is this the way you behave to a prince of the Holy Roman Empire—a knight of every order under the sun, and a most particular friend of your own master! Is this the way to behave to his secretary, who is one of the merriest fellows living; can sing a jolly song with any of you, and so bedevil a bottle of Geisenheim with lemons and brandy, that for the soul of ye, you wouldn't know it from the greenest Tokay. Out, out on ye! you know not what you have lost!"

Ere Essper had finished, more than one stout bolt had been drawn, and the great key had already entered the stouter lock.

"Most honourable sirs!" hiccoughed the porter; "in Our Lady's name enter. I had forgot myself; for in these autumn nights it is necessary to anticipate the cold with a glass of cheering liquor; and God forgive me! if I didn't mistake your most mighty highnesses for a couple of forest rovers, or small poachers at least. Thin entertainment here, kind sir—(here the last bolt was withdrawn)—a glass of indifferent liquor, and a prayer-book. I pass the time chiefly these cold nights with a few holy-minded friends, at our devotions. You heard us at our prayers, honourable lords!"

A prayer to St. Peter, a prayer to St. Paul!
A prayer to St. Jerome, a prayer to them all!

Here the devout porter most reverently crossed himself.

"A prayer to each one of the saintly stock,
But devotion alone, devotion to Hock!"

allowed Easper George—"you forget the best part of the burden, my honest friend."

"O!" said the porter, with an arch smile, as he opened the lodge door; "I'm glad to find that your honourable excellencies have a taste for hymns!"

The porter led them into a room, at a round table in which, about half a dozen individuals were usually engaged in discussing the merits of various greekable liquors. There was an attempt to get up a show of polite hospitality to Vivian as he entered; at the man who offered him his chair fell to the round in an unsuccessful struggle to be courteous; and another one, who had filled a large glass for the guest on his entrance, offered him, after a preliminary speech of incoherent compliments, the empty tittle by mistake. The porter and his friends, though they were all drunk, had sense enough to feel that the presence of a Prince of the Holy Roman Empire, a chevalier of every order under the sun, and the particular friend of their master, was not exactly a fit companion for themselves, and was rather a check on the gay freedom of equal companionship; and so, although the exertion was not little troublesome, the guardian of the gate reeled out of the room to inform his honoured lord of the sudden arrival of a stranger of distinction. Easper George immediately took his place, and ere the master of the lodge had returned, the noble secretary had not only given a choice toast, sung a choice song, and been hailed by the grateful plaudits of all present; but had proceeded in his attempt to fulfil the pledge which he had given at the gate—the very letter, by calling out lustily for a bottle of Geisenheim, lemons, brandy, and a bowl.

"Fairly and softly, my little son of Bacchus," said the porter as he re-entered—"fairly and softly, and then thou shalt want nothing; but remember I live to perform my duties unto the noble lord my master, and also to the noble prince your master. Thou wilt follow me," continued the porter, reeling as he bowed with the greatest consideration to Vivian; "if thou wilt follow me, most high and mighty sir, my master will be right glad to have the honour of drinking your health. And as for us, my friends, fairly and softly, fairly and softly, y I again. We'll talk of the Geisenheim anon. Am I to be absent from the first brewing? No, no! fairly and softly, fairly and softly; you can drink your health when I'm absent in cold liquor, and say those things which you could not well say before my face. But mind, most righteous and well-beloved, I'll have no flattery—no flattery. Flattery is a destruction of all good-fellowship; it's like a salmish liqueur in the midst of a bottle of wine. No flattery, no flattery; speak your minds, say any thing that comes first, as thus—'Well, for us, undrich the porter, I must declare that I never said an evil word against him;' or thus, 'A very good; has Hunadrich the porter, and a tight made lad together; no enemy with the girls, I warrant me;' thus, 'Well, for a good-hearted, good-looking, nut-drinking, virtuous, honourable, handsome, nerous, sharp-witted knave, commend me to undrich the porter;' but not a word more, my ends, not a word more, no flattery, no flattery. Now, sir, I beg your pardon."

The porter led the way through a cloistered walk, until they arrived at the door of the great mansion, to which they ascended by a lofty flight of steps; it opened into a very large octagonal hall, the sides of which were covered with fowling-pieces, stags' heads, *couteaux de chasse*, boar-spears, and huge fishing-nets. Passing through this hall they ascended a very noble staircase, on the first landing-place of which was a door, which Vivian's conductor opened, and ushering him into a large and well-lighted chamber, immediately withdrew. From the centre of this room descended a magnificently cut chandelier, which threw a graceful light upon a sumptuous banquet table, at which were seated eight very singular-looking personages. All of them wore hunting-dresses of various shades of straw-coloured cloth, with the exception of one, who sat on the left hand of the master of the feast, and the colour of whose costume was a rich crimson purple. From the top to the bottom of the table extended a double file of wine-glasses and goblets, of all sizes and all colours. There you might see brilliant relics of that ancient ruby-glass, the vivid tints of which seem lost to us for ever. Next to these were maraballed goblets of Venetian manufacture, of a clouded, creamy white; then came the huge hock-glass of some ancient primate of Mentz, nearly a yard high; and towering above its companions, as the church, its former master, predominated over the simple laymen of the middle ages. Why should I forget a set of most curious and antique drinking cups of painted glass, on whose rare surfaces were emblazoned the Kaiser and ten electors of the old Empire?

Vivian bowed to the party, and stood in silence, while they stared a most scrutinizing examination. At length the master of the feast spoke. He was a very stout man, with a prodigious paunch, which his tightened dress set off to a great advantage. His face, and particularly his forehead, were of great breadth. His eyes were set far apart. His long ears hung down almost to his shoulders; yet singular as he was, not only in these, but in many other respects, every thing was forgotten when your eyes lighted on his nose. It was the most prodigious nose that Vivian ever remembered—not only seeing, but hearing, or even reading of. In fact, it was too monstrous for the crude conception of a dream. This mighty nose hung down almost to its owner's chest.

"Be seated," said this personage, in no unpleasant voice, and he pointed to the chair opposite to him. Vivian took the vacated seat of the vice-president, who moved himself to the right. "Be seated, and whoever you may be—welcome! If our words be few, think not that our welcome is scant. We are not much given to speech, holding it for a principle that if a man's mouth be open, it should be for the purpose of receiving that which cheers a man's spirit; not of giving vent to idle words, which, as far as we have observed, produce no other effect save filling the world with crude and unprofitable fantasies, and distracting our attention when we are on the point of catching those flavours which alone make the world endurable. Therefore, briefly but heartily welcome! Welcome, Sir Stranger, from us and from all; and first from us, the Grand-duke of Schom Johannis-berger." Here his highness rose, and pulled out a large ruby tumbler from the file. Each of those present did the same, without, however, rising, and

the late vicepresident, who sat next to Vivian, invited him to follow their example.

The Grand-duke of Schoos Johannisberger brought forward, from beneath the table, an ancient and exquisite bottle of that choice liquor from which he took his exhilarating tittle. The cork was drawn, and the bottle circulated with rapidity; and in three minutes the ruby glasses were filled and emptied, and the grand-duke's health quaffed by all present.

"Again, Sir Stranger," continued the grand-duke, "briefly but heartily welcome!—welcome from us, and welcome from all—and first from us, and now from the Archduke of Hockheimer!"

The Archduke of Hockheimer was a thin sinewy man, with long, carrotty hair—eyelashes of the same colour, but of a remarkable length—and mustachios, which, though very thin, were so long that they met under his chin. Vivian could not refrain from noticing the extreme length, whiteness, and apparent sharpness of his teeth. The archduke did not speak, but leaning under the table, soon produced a bottle of hockheimer. He then took from the file one of the Venetian glasses of clouded white. All followed his example—the bottle was sent round, his health was pledged—and the Grand-duke of Schoos Johannisberger again spoke:—

"Again, Sir Stranger, briefly but heartily welcome! welcome from us, and welcome from all—and first from us, and now from the Elector of Steinberg!"

The Elector of Steinberg was a short, but very broad-backed, strong-built man. Though his head was large, his features were small, and appeared smaller from the miraculous quantity of coarse, shaggy, brown hair, which grew over almost every part of his face, and fell down upon his shoulders. The elector was as silent as his predecessor, and quick produced a bottle of Steinberg. The curious drinking cups of painted glass were immediately withdrawn from the file, the bottle was sent round, the elector's health was pledged, and the Grand-duke of Schoos Johannisberger again spoke:—

"Again, Sir Stranger, briefly but heartily welcome!—welcome from us, and welcome from all—and first from us, and now from the Margrave of Rudesheimer!"

The Margrave of Rudesheimer was a slender man, of elegant appearance. As Vivian watched the glance of his speaking eye, and the half-satirical and half-jovial smile which played upon his features, he hardly expected that his highness would be as silent as his predecessors. But the margrave spoke no word. He gave a kind of shout of savage exultation as he smacked his lips after dashing off his glass of Rudesheimer; and scarcely noticing the salutations of those who drank his health, he threw himself back in his chair, and listened seemingly with a smile of derision, while the Grand-duke of Schoos Johannisberger again spoke:—

"Again, Sir Stranger, briefly but heartily welcome!—welcome from us, and welcome from all—and first from us, and now from the Landgrave of Graffenberg!"

The Landgrave of Graffenberg was a rude, awkward-looking person, who, when he rose from his seat, stared like an idiot, and seemed utterly ignorant of what he ought to do. But his quick companion, the Margrave of Rudesheimer, soon

thrust a bottle of Graffenberg into the landgrave's hand, and with some trouble and bustle the landgrave extracted the cork; and then helping himself, sat down, forgetting either to salute, or to return the salutations of those present.

"Again, Sir Stranger, briefly but heartily welcome!—welcome from us, and welcome from all—and first from us, and now from the Palgrave of Geisenheim!"

The Palgrave of Geisenheim was a dwarf in spectacles. He drew the cork from his bottle like lightning, and mouthed at his companions, even while he bowed to them.

"Again, Sir Stranger, briefly but heartily welcome!—welcome from us, and welcome from all—and first from us, and now from the Count Markbrunnen!"

The Count of Markbrunnen was a sullen-looking personage, with lips protruding nearly three inches beyond his nose. From each side of his upper jaw projected a large tooth.

"Thanks to heaven!" said Vivian, as the grand-duke spoke—"thanks to heaven, here is our last man!"

"Again, Sir Stranger, briefly but heartily welcome!—welcome from us, and welcome from all—and first from us, and now from the Baron of Asmanhausen!"

The Baron of Asmanhausen sat on the left of the Grand-duke of Schoos Johannisberger, and was dressed, as we have before said, in a unique costume of crimson purple. The baron stood without his boots, about six feet eight. He was a sleek man, with a head no bigger than a child's and a pair of small, black, beady eyes, of singular brilliancy. The baron introduced a bottle of the only red wine that the Rhine boasts; but which for its fragrant and fruity flavour, and its brilliant tint, is perhaps even superior to the sunset glow of Burgundy.

"And now," continued the grand-duke, "having introduced you to all present, sir, we will begin drinking."

Vivian had submitted to the introductory ceremonies with the good grace which becomes a man of the world; but the coolness of his highness's last observation recalled our hero's wandering senses; and, at the same time, alarmed at discovering that eight bottles of wine had been discussed by the party, merely as a preliminary, and emboldened by the contents of one bottle which had fallen to his own share, he had the courage to confront the Grand-duke of Schoos Johannisberger in his own castle.

"Your wine, most noble lord, stands in no need of my commendation; but, as I must mention it, let it not be said that I ever mentioned it without praise. After a ten hour's ride, its flavour is so grateful to the palate as its strength is refreshing to the heart; but though old hock, in homely phrase, is styled meat and drink, I confess to you that, at this moment, I stand in need of even more solid sustenance than the juice of the sunny hill."

"A traitor!" shrieked all present, each with his right arm stretched out, glass in hand; "a traitor!"

"No traitor," answered Vivian; "no traitor, my noble and right thirsty lords; but one of the most hungry mortals that ever yet famished."

The only answer that he received for some time, was a loud and ill-boding murmur. The

long whisker of the Archduke of Hockheimer curled with renewed rage: audible, though suppressed, was the growl of the hairy Elector of Steinberg; fearful the corporeal involutions of the tall Baron of Asmanshausen; and savagely sounded the wild laugh of the bright-eyed Margrave of Rudesheimer.

"Silence, my lords," said the grand-duke.

"Forget we that ignorance is the stranger's portion, and that no treason can exist among those who are not our sworn subjects! Pity we rather the degeneracy of this bold-spoken youth; and in the plenitude of our mercy, let us pardon his demand! Know ye, unknown knight, that you are in the presence of an august society, who are here met at one of their accustomed convocations; whereof the purport is the frequent quaffing of those most glorious liquors, of which the sacred Rhine is the great father. We profess to find a perfect commentary on the Pindaric land of the strongest element, in the circumstance of the banks of a river being the locality where the juice of the grape is most delicious—and holding, therefore, that water is strongest, because, in a manner, it giveth birth to wine; we also hold it as a sacred element, and, consequently, most religiously refrain from refreshing our bodies with that sanctified and most undrinkable fluid. Know ye, that we are the children of the Rhine—the conservators of his favours—profound in the learning of his exquisite aroma, and deep students in the mysteries of his imperceptible nare. Professing not to be immortal, we find in the exercise of the chase a noble means to preserve that health which is necessary for the performance of the ceremonies to which we are pledged. At to-morrow's dawn our bugle sounds, and thou, stranger, may engage the wild boar at our side; at to-morrow's noon the castle bell will toll, and thou, stranger, may eat of the beast which thou hast conquered:—but to feed after midnight, to destroy the power of catching the delicate flavour, to annihilate the faculty of detecting the undefinable nare, is heresy—most rank and damnable heresy!—Therefore at this hour soundeth no plate nor platter—jingleth no knife nor culinary instrument in the PALACE OF THE WINES. Yet, in consideration of thy youth, and that on the whole thou hast tasted thy liquor like a proper man, from which we augur the best expectations of the manner in which thou wilt drink it,—we feel confident that our brothers of the goblet will permit us to grant thee the substantial solace of a shoeing horn."

"Let it be a Dutch herring, then," said Vivian; "and as you have souls to be saved, grant me one slice of bread."

"It cannot be," said the grand-duke; "but as we are willing to be indulgent to bold hearts, verily, we will wink at the profanation of a single toast; but you must order an anchovy one, and give secret instructions to the waitingman to forget the fish. It must be counted as a second shoeing horn; and you will forfeit for the last a bottle of Markbrunnen."

"And now, illustrious brothers," continued the grand-duke, "let us drink 1726!"

All present gave a single cheer, in which Vivian was obliged to join; and they honoured with a glass of the very year, the memory of a celebrated vintage.

"1748!" said the grand-duke.

Two cheers, and the same ceremony.

1766, and 1779, were honoured in the same manner; but when the next toast was drunk, Vivian almost observed in the countenances of the grand-duke and his friends, the signs of incipient insanity.

"1783!" hallooed the grand-duke, in a tone of the most triumphant exultation; and his mighty proboeas, as it snuffed the air, almost caused a whirlwind round the room—Hockheimer gave a roar—Steinberg a growl—Rudesheimer a wild laugh—Markbrunnen a loud grunt—Grafenberg a bray—Asmanshausen's long body moved to and fro with wonderful agitation;—and little Geisenheim's bright eyes glistened through their glasses, as if they were on fire. How ludicrous is the incipient inebriety of a man who wears spectacles!

Thanks to an excellent constitution, which recent misery, however, had somewhat shattered, Vivian bore up against all these attacks; and when they had got down to 1802, from the excellency of his digestion, and the inimitable skill with which he emptied many of the latter glasses under the table, he was, perhaps, in better condition than any one in the room.

And now arose the idiot Grafenberg; Rudesheimer all the time, with a malicious smile, faintly pulling him down by the skirt of his coat; as if he were desirous of preventing an exposure which his own advice had brought about. He had been persuading Grafenberg the whole evening to make a speech.

"My lord duke," brayed the jackass; and then he stopped dead, and looked round the room with an unmeaning stare.

"Hear, hear, hear!" was the general cry; but Grafenberg seemed astounded at any one being desirous of hearing his voice, or for a moment seriously entertaining the idea that he could have any thing to say; and so he stared again, and again, and again; till at last, Rudesheimer, by dint of kicking his shins under the table,—the margrave the whole time seeming perfectly motionless—at length extracted a sentence from the asinine landgrave.

"My lord duke!" again commenced Grafenberg; and again he stopped.

"Go on," shouted all.

"My lord duke! Rudesheimer is treading on my toes!"

Here little Geisenheim gave a loud laugh of derision; in which all joined, except surly Markbrunnen, whose lips protruded an extra inch beyond their usual length, when he found that all were laughing at his friend. The grand-duke at last procured silence.

"Shame! shame! most mighty princes! Shame! shame! most noble lords. Is it with this irreverent glee, these scurvy flouts, and indecorous mockery, that you would have this stranger believe that we celebrate the ceremonies of our father Rhine? Shame, I say—and silence! It is time that we should prove to him, that we are not merely a boisterous and unruly party of swilling varlets, who leave their brains in their cups. It is time that we should do something to prove that we are capable of better and worthier things. What ho! my Lord of Geisenheim! shall I speak twice to the guardian of the horn of the Fairy King?"

The little dwarf instantly jumped from his seat, and proceeded to the end of the room; whence,

after having bowed three times with great reverence before a small black cabinet made of vine wood, he opened it with a golden key, and then with great pomp and ceremony bore its contents to the grand-duke. His royal highness took from the little dwarf the horn of a gigantic and antediluvian elk. The cunning hand of an ancient German artificer had formed this curious relic into a drinking cup. It was exquisitely polished, and cased in the interior with silver. On the outside the only ornaments were three richly chased silver rings, which were placed nearly at equal distances. When the grand-duke had carefully examined this most precious horn, he held it up with reverence to all present, and a party of devout Catholics could not have paid greater homage to the elevated Host, than did the various guests to the horn of the Fairy King. Even the satanic smile on Rudesheimer's countenance was for a moment subdued; and all bowed. The grand-duke then delivered the mighty cup to his neighbour, the Archduke of Hockheimer, who held it with both hands until his royal highness had emptied into it, with great care, three bottles of Johannisberger. All rose: the grand-duke took the goblet in one hand, and with the other he dexterously put aside his most inconvenient and enormous nose. Dead silence prevailed, save the roar of the liquor as it rushed down the grand-duke's throat, and resounded through the chamber like the distant dash of a waterfall. In three minutes his royal highness had completed his task, the horn had quitted his mouth, his nose had again resumed its usual situation, and as he handed the cup to the archduke, Vivian thought that a material change had taken place in his countenance since he had quaffed his last draught. His eyes seemed more apart; his ears seemed broader and longer; and his nose was most visibly lengthened. The archduke, before he commenced his draught, ascertained with great scrupulosity that his predecessor had taken his fair share by draining the horn as far as the first ring; and then he poured off with great rapidity his own portion. But though in performing the same task, he was quicker than the master of the party, the draught, not only apparently but audibly, produced upon him a much more decided effect than had it on the grand-duke; for when the second ring was drained, the archduke gave a loud roar of exultation, and stood up for some time from his seat, with his hands resting on the table over which he leaned, as if he were about to spring upon his opposite neighbour. The cup was now handed across the table to the Baron of Asmanshausen. His lordship performed his task with ease; but as he withdrew the horn from his mouth, all present, except Vivian, gave a loud cry of "Supernaculum!" The baron smiled with great contempt as he tossed, with a careless hand, the great horn upside downwards, and was unable to shed upon his nail even the one excusable pearl. He handed the refilled horn to the Elector of Steinberg, who drank his portion with a growl; but afterwards seemed so pleased with the facility of his execution, that instead of delivering it to the next bibber, the Palsgrave of Markbrunnen, he commenced some clumsy attempts at a dance of triumph, in which he certainly would have proceeded, had not the loud grunts of the surly and thick-lipped Markbrunnen occasioned the interference of the grand-duke. *Supernaculum* now fell to the Margrave of

Rudesheimer, who gave a loud and long-continued laugh as the dwarf of Geisenheim filled the horn for the third time.

While this ceremony was going on, a thousand plans had occurred to Vivian for his escape; but all, on second thoughts, proved impracticable. With agony he had observed that *supernaculum* was his miserable lot. Could he but have foisted it on the idiot Grafenberg, he might, by his own impudence and the other's stupidity, have escaped. But he could not flatter himself that he should be successful in bringing about this end, for he observed with sorrow, that the malicious Rudesheimer had not for a moment ceased watching him with a keen and exulting glance. Geisenheim performed his task; and ere Vivian could ask for the goblet, Rudesheimer, with a fell laugh, had handed it to Grafenberg. The greedy ass drank his portion with ease, and indeed drank far beyond his limit. The cup was in Vivian's hand, Rudesheimer was roaring (*supernaculum*) louder than all—Vivian saw that the covetous Grafenberg had providentially rendered his task comparatively light; but even as it was, he trembled at the idea of drinking at a single draught, more than a pint of most vigorous and powerful wine.

"My lord duke," said Vivian, "you and your companions forget that I am little used to these ceremonies; that I am yet uninitiated in the mysteries of the *nära*. I have endeavoured to prove myself no chicken-hearted water-drinking crow, and I have more wine within me at this moment than any man yet bore without dinner. I think, therefore, that I have some grounds for requesting indulgence; and I have no doubt that the good sense of yourself and your friends—"

Ere Vivian could finish, he almost fancied that a well-stocked menagerie had been suddenly emptied in the room. Such roaring, and such growling, and such hissing, could only have been exceeded on some grand feast-day in the recesses of a Brazilian forest. Asmanshausen looked as fierce as a boa constrictor before dinner. The proboscis of the grand-duke heaved to and fro like the trunk of an enraged elephant. Hockheimer glared like a Bengal tiger, about to spring upon its prey. Steinberg growled like a Baltic bear. In Markbrunnen Vivian recognised the wild boar he had himself often hunted. Grafenberg bayed like a jackass; and Geisenheim chattered like an ape. But all was forgotten and unnoticed when Vivian heard the fell and frantic shouts of the laughing hyena, the Margrave of Rudesheimer! Vivian, in despair, dashed the horn of Oberon to his mouth. One pull—a gasp—another desperate draught—it was done! and followed by a *supernaculum* almost superior to the exulting Asmanshausen's.

A loud shout hailed the exploit, and when the shout had subsided into silence, the voice of the Grand-duke of Schoess Johannisberger was again heard:—

"Noble lords and princes! I congratulate you on the acquisition of a congenial comate, and the accession to our society of one, who I now venture to say, will never disgrace the glorious foundation; but who, on the contrary, with heaven's blessing and the aid of his own good palate, will, it is hoped, add to our present knowledge of *flavours* by the detection of new ones, and by illustration drawn from frequent study and constant observation."

ous naïre. In consideration of his noble achievement, I do pro-drink but very lightly to-night, and ours after to-morrow's dawn, under oak. Nevertheless, before we part, inment of our own good bodies, and ward, an act of courtesy unto this un-plied stranger, let us pledge him in grape of fame, to which he may ore accustomed than unto the ever es of our father Rhine."—Here the dded to little Geisenheim, who in a it his elbow.

in that Vivian remonstrated, excused joining, or assured his royal highness uct had already been so peculiarly t any further attention was at pre-ary. A curiously cut glass, which calculation Vivian reckoned would three pints, was placed before each basket, containing nine bottles of unpagne, première qualité, was set nness.

no bigots, noble stranger," said the he took one of the bottles, and scr-ark with a very keen eye;—"We are here are moments when we drink nor is Burgundy forgotten, nor the ix, nor the glowing grape of the !" His highness held the bottle at gle with the chandelier. The wire whirr!—The exploded cork whizzed r, extinguished one of the burners of r, and brought the cut drop which d under it rattling down among the table. The grand-duke poured the nto his great goblet, and bowing to all ed on its contents with as much eager-nsane dog rushes to a puddle in July. peration was performed as regularly illy by all, except Vivian. Eight extinguished; eight diamond drops ttering on the table; eight human iehled a miraculous carouse, by each bottle of sparkling Champagne. It turn. All eyes were fixed on him t perfect attention. He was now, desperate; for had he been able to : which long practice alone could have an to perform, he felt conscious that ut of his power to taste a single drop s of his bottle. However, he loosend held the bottle at an angle with ; but the cork flew quite wild, and great force the mighty nose of the

"cried all. and a forfeit!" cried the Margrave er.

is sufficient punishment," said the who, however, still felt the smarting sault on his proboscis. "You must : horn full of Champagne," continued

said Vivian, "enough of this; I conformed in a degree which may ect my health, with your barbarous t there is moderation even in excess, ou please, my lord, your servant may y apartment, or I shall again mount

"You shall not leave this room," said the grand-duke, with great firmness.

"Who shall prevent me?" asked Vivian.

"I will—all will!" said the grand-duke.

"Now, by heavens! a more insolent and inhospitable old ruffian did I never meet. By the wine you worship, if one dare touch me, you shall rue it all your born days; and as for you, sir, if you advance one step towards me, I'll take that sausage of a nose of yours and hurl you half round your own castle!"

"Treason!" shouted all, and looked to the grand-duke.

"Treason!" said the enraged majesty. The allusion to the nose had done away with all the constitutional doubts which his highness had sported so moderately at the commencement of the evening.

"Treason!" howled the grand-duke: "instant punishment!"

"What punishment?" asked Asmanshausen.

"Drown him in the new butt of Moelle," recommended Rudesheimer. The suggestion was immediately adopted. Every one rose: the little Geisenheim already had hold of Vivian's shoulder; and Grafenberg, instigated by the cowardly but malicious Rudesheimer, was about to seize him by the neck. Vivian took the dwarf and hurled him at the chandelier, in whose brazen chains the little being got entangled, and there remained. An unexpected cross-buttocker floored the incautious and unscientific Grafenberg; and following up these advantages, Vivian laid open the skull of his prime enemy, the retreating Margrave of Rudesheimer, with the assistance of the horn of Oberon; which flew from his hand to the other end of the room, from the force with which it rebounded from the cranium of the enemy. All the rest were now on the advance; but giving a vigorous and unexpected push to the table, the grand-duke and Asmanshausen were thrown over, and the nose of the former got entangled with the awkward windings of the fairy king's horn. Taking advantage of this move, Vivian rushed to the door. He escaped, but had not time to secure the lock against the enemy, for the stout Elector of Steinberg was too quick for him. He dashed down the stairs with extraordinary agility; but just as he had gained the large octagonal hall, the whole of his late boom companions, with the exception of the dwarf Geisenheim, who was left in the chandelier, were visible in full chase. Escape was impossible, and so Vivian, followed by the seven nobles, who were headed by the grand-duke, described with all possible rapidity a circle round the hall. He, of course, gave himself up for lost; but luckily for him, it never occurred to one of his pursuers to do any thing but follow their leader; and as, therefore, they never dodged Vivian, and as also he was a much fleet runner than the fat grand-duke, whose pace, of course, regulated the progress of his followers, the party might have gone on at this rate until all of them had dropped from fatigue, had not the occurrence of a still more ludicrous incident prevented this consummation.

The hall-door was suddenly dashed open, and Esser George rushed in, followed in full chase by Hunsdrich and the guests of the lodge, who were the servants of Vivian's pursuers. Esser darted in between Rudesheimer and Markbrunnen, and Hunsdrich and his friends following the same way.

tics as their lords and masters, without making any attempt to surround and hem in the object of their pursuit, merely followed him in order; describing, but in a contrary direction, a lesser circle within the eternal round of the first party. It was only proper for the servants to give their masters the wall. In spite of their very disagreeable and dangerous situation, it was with difficulty that Vivian refrained from laughter as he met Essper regularly every half minute at the foot of the great staircase. Suddenly, as Essper passed, he took Vivian by the waist, and with a single jerk placed him on the stairs; and then, with a dexterous dodge, he brought Hunsdrich the porter and the grand-duke in full contact.

"I have got you at last," said Hunsdrich, seizing hold of his grace of Schoss Johannisberger by the ears, and mistaking him for Essper.

"I have got you at last," said his royal highness, grappling with his porter, whom he supposed to be Vivian. Both struggled: their followers pushed on with impetuous force: the battle was general; the overthrow universal. In a moment all were on the ground; and if any less inebriated, or more active individual attempted to rise, Essper immediately brought him down with a boar-spear.

"Give me that large fishing-net," said Essper to Vivian; "quick, quick, your highness."

Vivian pulled down an immense coarse net, which covered nearly five sides of the room. It was immediately unfolded, and spread over the fallen crew. To fasten it down with half a dozen boar-spears, which they drove into the floor, was the work of a moment. Essper had one pull at the proboscis of the Grand-duke of Schoss Johannisberger before he hurried Vivian away; and in ten minutes they were again on their horses' backs, and galloping through the star-lit wood.

CHAPTER XVII.

It is the hour before the labouring bee has left his golden hive; not yet the blooming day buds in the blushing east; not yet has the victorious Lucifer chased from the early sky the fainting splendour of the stars of night. All is silent, save the light breath of morn waking the slumbering leaves. Even now a golden streak breaks over the gray mountains. Hark! to shrill chanticleer! As the cock crows, the owl ceases. Hark! to shrill chanticleer's feathered rival! the mounting lark springs from the sullen earth, and welcomes with his hymn the coming day. The golden streak has expanded into a crimson crescent, and rays of living fire flame over the rose-enamelled east. Man rises sooner than the sun; and already sound the whistle of the ploughman, the song of the mower, and the forge of the smith,—and hark! to the bugle of the hunter, and the baying of his deep-mouthed hound. The sun is up—the generating sun! and temple, and tower, and tree; the massy wood, and the broad field, and the distant hill, burst into sudden light—quickly up-curved is the dusky mist from the shining river—quickly is the cold dew drunk from the raised heads of the drooping flowers!

These observations are not by our hero; for although, like all other British youth, he had been accustomed from an early age to scribble, and gene-

rally devoted his powers to the celebration of sunrise, sunset, the moon, the evening star, and the other principal planets; nevertheless, at the present moment, he was far from being in a disposition to woo the muse. A quick canter, by a somewhat clearer light than the one which had so unfortunately guided himself and his companion to the castle of the Grand-duke of Schoss Johannisberger, soon carried them again to the skirts of the forest, and at this minute they are emerging on the plain from yonder dark wood.

"By heavens! Essper, I cannot reach the town this morning. Was ever any thing more terribly unfortunate! A curse on those drunken fools! What with no rest, and no solid refreshment, and the whole rivers of hock that are flowing within me, and the infernal exertion of running round that vile hall, I feel fairly exhausted, and could at this moment fall from my saddle. See you no habitation, my good fellow, where there might be a chance of a breakfast and a few hours' rest? We are now well out of the forest—O! surely there is smoke from behind those pines! Some good wit, I trust, is by her chimney-corner."

"If my sense be not destroyed by the fumes of that mulled Geisenheim, which still haunts me, I could swear that the smoke is the soul of a burning weed."

"A truce to your jokes, good Essper, I really am very ill. A year ago I could have laughed at our misfortunes, but now it is very different; and, by heavens, I must have breakfast! So stir—excite yourself, and although I die for it, let us canter up to the smoke."

"No, my dear master, I will ride on before. Do you follow gently, and if there be a pigeon in the pot in all Germany, I swear by the patron saint of every village for fifty miles round, provided they be not heretics, that you shall taste of its breast-bone this morning."

The smoke did issue from a chimney, but the door of the cottage was shut.

"Hilloa! hilloa! within, within!" shouted Essper; "who shuts the sun out on a September morning?"

The door was at length slowly opened, and a most ill-favoured and inhospitable-looking dame demanded, in a sullen voice, "What's your will?"

"O! you pretty creature!" said Essper, who was still a little tipsy.

The door would have been shut in his face, had not he darted into the house before the woman was aware.

"Truly, a very neat and pleasant dwelling! and you would have no objection, I guess, to give a handsome young gentleman some little sop of something, just to remind him, you know, that it isn't dinner-time."

"We give no sops here; what do you take us for! and so, my handsome young gentleman, be off, or I shall call the Goodman."

"O! you beauty: why, I'm not the handsome young gentleman, that's my master! who, if he were not half starved to death, would fall in love with you at first sight."

"O! your master—is he in the carriage?"

"Carriage! no—on horseback."

"Travellers!"

"To be sure, my dearest dame; travellers true."

"Travellers true, without baggage, and at this time of morn! Methinks, by your looks, you

er, that you're travellers whom it may be wise to honest woman not to meet."

What! some people have an objection, then, forty kreuser piece on a sunny morning."

saying, Essper, in a careless manner, tossed a piece in the air, and made it ring on a fellow as he caught it in the palm of his hand when cended.

is that your master?" asked the woman.

Ay! is it; and the prettiest piece of flesh I've this month, except yourself."

Well! if the gentleman likes bread, he can sit here," said the woman, pointing to a dirty bench, and throwing a sour black loaf upon the

Now, sir!" said Essper, wiping the bench with care, "lie you here and rest yourself. I've been in a marshal sleep upon a harder sofa. Breakfast will be ready immediately, won't it, m?"

Haven't I given you the bread! If you cannot eat that, you may ride where you can find cheer."

Yes! you beauty—yes! you angel—yes! you creature—but what's bread for a traveller's fast! But I dare say his highness will be contented—young men are so easily pleased when 's a pretty girl in the case—you know that, wench! you do, you little hussy, you're taking stage of it."

Something like a smile lit up the face of the sultry woman when she said—"There may be an angel in the house, but I don't know."

But you will soon, you dear creature! you see highness is in no hurry for his breakfast. He hasn't touched the bread yet, he's thinking of you, no doubt of it; now go and get the eggs, that's duty! O! what a pretty foot!" bawled Essper after her, as she left the room. "Now confound the old hag, if there's not meat about this house, I keep my mouth shut at our next dinner. I wonder what's in that closet!—fastened!" Here the untrusting woman began sniffing and smelling in all the corners. "O! here's our breakfast! my good lord, is it so? What's that in the corner? a s tusk! Ay! ay! a huntsman's cottage—when lived a huntsman on black bread before! cheer! good cheer, sir! we shall have such a feast to-day, that, by the gods of all nations, shall never forget it!—O! bless your bright for these eggs, and that basin of new milk."

saying, Essper took them out of her hand, and placed them before Vivian.

was saying to myself, my pretty girl, when were out of the room—Essper George, Essper George—good cheer, Essper George—say prayers, and never despair—come, what come you'll full among friends at last; and how do you know that your dream mayn't come true after 'Dream!' said I to myself, 'What dream?'—am!" said myself to I, 'didn't you dream that breakfasted in the month of September with a velvet young woman, with gold ear-rings; and she standing before you now! and didn't she every thing in the world to make you comfortable?'

Didn't she give you milk and eggs, and when complained that you and meat had been but friends of late, didn't she open her own closet, give you as fine a piece of hunting beef as was set before a jagd junker?"—O! you beauty!"

think you'll turn me into an inn-keeper's

wife at last," said the dame, her stern features relaxing into a smile; and while she spoke she advanced to the great closet, Essper George following her, walking on his toes, lolling out his enormous tongue, and stroking his mock paunch. As she opened it he jumped upon a chair, and had examined every shelf in less time than a pistol could flash. "White bread! O! you beauty, fit for a countess. Salt! O! you angel, worthy of Poland. Boar's head!! O! you sweet creature, no better at Troyes! and hunting beef!!! my dream is true!" and he bore in triumph to Vivian, who was nearly asleep, the ample round of salt and pickled beef, well stuffed with all kinds of savoury herbs.

"Now, sir!" said he, putting before his master a plate and necessary implements; "let your heart gladden—No, sir! no, sir! cut the other side—cut the other side—there's the silver edge. Now, sir, some fat—drink your milk—drink your milk—such beef as this will soon settle all your Rheumatism. Why, your eyes are brighter already. Have you breakfasted, ma'am? You have, eh!—O! breakfast again—never too much of a good thing. I always breakfast myself till dinner-time; and when dinner's finished, I begin my supper. Pray, where the devil are we?—Is this Reisenberg?"

"So we call it."

"And a very good name, too!—Let me give you a little stuffing, sir. And are the grand-duke's gentlemen out a hunting?"

"No, it's the prince."

"The prince—ah! I dare say you've a little more milk. What a nice cottage this! How I should like to live here—with you though—with you—thank you for the milk—quite fresh—beautiful! I'm my own man again! How do you feel, sir?"

"Thanks to this good woman, much better; and with her kind permission, I will now rest myself on this bench for a couple of hours. This, good lady," said Vivian, giving her some florins, "I do not offer as a remuneration for your kindness, but as a slight token of—"

Here Vivian began to snore. Essper George, who always slept with his eyes open, and who never sat still for a second, save when eating, immediately left the table; and in five minutes was as completely domesticated in the huntsman's cottage, as if he had lived there all his life. The woman was quite delighted with a guest who, in the course of half an hour, had cleaned her house from top to bottom, dug up half her garden, mended her furniture, and milked her cow.

It was nearly an hour before noon, ere the travellers had remounted. Their road again entered the enormous forest which they had been skirting for the last two days. The huntsmen were abroad; and the fine weather, his good meal, and seasonable rest, and the inspiring sounds of the bugle, made Vivian feel quite recovered from his late fatigues.

"That must be a true-hearted huntsman, Essper, by the sound of his bugle. I never heard one played with more spirit. Hark! how fine it dies away in the wood—fainter and fainter, yet how clear! It must be now half a mile distant."

"I hear nothing so wonderful," said Essper, putting the two middle fingers of his right hand before his mouth, and sounding a note so clear and beautiful, so exactly imitative of the fall which Vivian had noticed and admired, that for a moment

he imagined that the huntsman was at his elbow.

"Thou art a cunning knave!—do it again." This time Essper made the very wood echo. In a few minutes a horseman galloped up. He was as spruce a cavalier as ever pricked gay steed on the pliant grass. He was dressed in a green military uniform, and a small gilt bugle hung down his side. His spear told them that he was hunting the wild boar. When he saw Vivian and Essper he suddenly pulled up his horse, and seemed very much astonished.

"I thought that his highness had been here," said the huntsman.

"No one has passed us, sir," said Vivian.

"I could have sworn that his bugle sounded from this very spot," said the huntsman. "My ear seldom deceives me."

"We heard a bugle to the right, sir," said Essper.

"Thanks, thanks, thanks, my friend,"—and the huntsman was about to gallop off.

"May I ask the name of his highness," said Vivian.

"We are strangers in this country."

"That may certainly account for your ignorance," said the huntsman; "but no one who lives in this land can be unacquainted with his Serene Highness the Prince of Little Lilliput, my illustrious master. I have the honour," continued the huntsman, "of being jagd junker, or gentilhomme de la chasse to his serene highness."

"Tis an office of great dignity," said Vivian, "and one that I have no doubt you most admirably perform—I will not stop you, sir, to admire your horse."

The huntsman bowed very courteously, and galloped off.

"You see, sir," said Essper George, "that my bugle has deceived even the jagd junker, or gentilhomme de la chasse of his Serene Highness the Prince of Little Lilliput himself;" so saying, Essper again sounded his instrument.

"A joke may be carried too far, my good fellow," said Vivian. "A true huntsman, like myself, must not spoil a brother's sport. So silence your bugle."

Now again galloped up the jagd junker, or gentilhomme de la chasse of his Serene Highness the Prince of Little Lilliput. He pulled up his horse again, apparently as much astounded as ever.

"I thought that his highness had been here," said the huntsman.

"No one has passed us," said Vivian.

"We heard a bugle to the right," said Essper George.

"I am afraid his serene highness must be in distress. The whole suite are off the scent. It must have been his bugle, for the regulations of this forest are so strict, that no one dare sound a blast but his serene highness." Away galloped the huntsman.

"Next time I must give you up, Essper," said Vivian.

"One more blast, my good master!" begged Essper, in a very supplicating voice. "This time to the left—the confusion will be then complete."

"On your life not—I command you not," and so they rode on in silence. But it was one of those days when Essper could neither be silent nor

subdued. Greatly annoyed at not being permitted to play his bugle, he amused himself for some time by making the most hideous grimaces; but as there were none either to admire or to be alarmed by the contortions of his countenance, this diversion soon palled. He then endeavoured to find some entertainment in riding his horse in every mode except the right one; but again, who was to be astounded by his standing on one foot on the saddle, or by his imitations of the ludicrous shifts of a female equestrian, perfectly ignorant of the manège. At length he rode with his back to his horse's head, and imitated the peculiar sound of every animal that he met. A young fawn, and various kinds of birds already followed him; and even a squirrel had perched on his horse's neck. And now they came to a small farm-house which was situated in the forest. The yard here offered great amusement to Essper. He neighed, and half a dozen horses' heads immediately appeared over the hedge; another neigh, and they were following him in the road. The dog rushed out to seize the dangerous stranger, and recover his charge; but Essper gave an amicable bark, and in a second the dog was jumping by his side, and engaged in the most earnest and friendly conversation. A loud and continued grunt soon brought out the pigs; and meeting three or four cows returning home, a few lowing sounds soon seduced them from keeping their appointment with the dairymaid. A stupid jackass, who stared with astonishment at the procession, was saluted with a lusty bray, which immediately induced him to swell the ranks: and as Essper passed the poultry-yard, he so deceitfully informed the inhabitants that they were about to be fed, that twenty broods of ducks and chickens were immediately after him. The careful hens were terribly alarmed at the danger which their offspring incurred from the heels and hoofs of the quadrupeds; but while they were in doubt and despair, a whole flock of stately geese issued in solemn pomp from another gate of the farm-yard, and commenced a cackling conversation with the delighted Essper. So contagious is the force of example, and so great was the confidence which the hens place in these pompous geese, who were not the first fools whose solemn air has deceived a few old females; that as soon as they perceived them in the train of the horsemen, they also trotted up to pay their respects at his levée. And here Vivian Grey stopped his horse, and burst into a fit of laughter.

But it was not a moment for mirth; for rushing down the road with awful strides appeared two sturdy and enraged husbandmen, one armed with a pike, and the other with a pitch-fork, and accompanied by a frantic female, who never for a moment ceased hallooing, "Murder, rape, and fire!" every thing but "theft."

"Now, Essper, here's a pretty scrape!"

"Stop, you rascals!" hallooed Adolph the herdsman.

"Stop, you gang of thieves!" hallooed Wilhelm the ploughman.

"Stop, you bloody murderers!" shrieked Philippa, the indignant mistress of the dairy and the poultry-yard.

"Stop, you villains!" hallooed all three. The villains certainly made no attempt to escape, and in half a second the enraged household of the forest farmer would have seized on Essper George,

not just at this crisis he uttered loud sounds in the respective language of every bird and beast about him; and suddenly they all turned round, and counter-marched. Away rushed the terrified Adolph the herdsmen, while one of his own cows was on his back. Still quicker scampered off the scared Wilhelm the ploughman, while one of his own steeds kicked him in his rear. Quicker than all these, shouting, screaming, shrieking, dashed back the unhappy mistress of the hen-roost, with all her subjects crowding about her; some on her elbow, some on her head, her lace cap destroyed, her whole dress disorganized. Another loud cry from Essper George, and the retreating birds waddled with redoubled vigour. Still louder were the neighs of the horses, the bray of the jackass, and the barking of the dog, the squeaking of the swine, and the lowing of the cows! Essper enjoyed the scene at his ease, leaning his back in a careless manner against his horse's neck. The movements of the crowd were so quick that they were soon out of sight.

"A trophy!" called out Essper, as he jumped off his horse, and picked up the pike of Adolph the herdsman.

"A boar-spear, or I am no huntsman," said Vivian—"give it me a moment!" He threw it up into the air, and caught it with ease, poised it on his finger with the practised skill of one well used to handle the weapon, and with the same delight imprinted on his countenance as greets the sight of an old friend.

"This forest, Essper, and this spear, make me remember days when I was vain enough to think that I had been sufficiently visited with sorrow. Ah! little did I then know of human misery, although I imagined I had suffered so much!—But not my will be done!" muttered Vivian to himself.

As he spoke, the sounds of a man in distress were heard from the right side of the road.

"Who calls, who calls?" cried Essper; a shout was the only answer. There was no path, but the underwood was low, and Vivian took his horse, an old forester, across it with ease. Essper's jibbed. Vivian found himself in a small green glade of about thirty feet square. It was thickly surrounded with lofty trees, save at the point where he had entered; and at the farthest corner of it, near some gray rocks, a huntsman was engaged in a desperate contest with a wild boar.

The huntsman was on his right knee, and held his spear with both hands at the furious beast. It was an animal of extraordinary size and power. Its eyes glittered like fire. On the turf to its right a small gray mastiff, of powerful make, lay on its back, bleeding profusely, with its body ripped open. Another dog, a fawn-coloured bitch, had seized on the left ear of the beast; but the under-tusk of the boar, which was nearly a foot long, had penetrated the courageous dog, and the poor creature writhed in agony, even while it attempted to wreak its revenge upon its enemy. The huntsman was nearly exhausted. Had it not been for the courage of the fawn-coloured dog, which, clinging to the boar, prevented it making a full dash at the man, he must have been instantly gored. Vivian was off his horse in a minute, which, frightened at the sight of the wild boar, dashed again over the hedge.

"Keep firm, keep firm, sir!" said he, "do not

move. I'll amuse him behind, and make him turn."

A graze of Vivian's spear on its back, though it did not materially injure the beast, for there the boar is nearly invulnerable, annoyed it; and dashing off the fawn-coloured dog, with great force, it turned on its new assailant. Now there are only two places in which the wild boar can be assailed with any effect; and these are just between the eyes, and between the shoulders. Great caution, however, is necessary in aiming these blows, for the boar is very adroit in transfixing the weapon on his snout, or his tusks; and if once you miss, particularly if you are not assisted by your dogs, which Vivian was not, 'tis all over with you; for the enraged animal rushes in like lightning, and gored you must be.

But Vivian was quite fresh, and quite cool. The animal suddenly stood still, and eyed its new enemy. Vivian was quiet, for he had no objection to give the beast an opportunity of retreating to its den. But retreat was not its object—it suddenly darted at the huntsman, who, however, was not off his guard, though unable from a slight wound in his knee to rise. Vivian again annoyed the boar at the rear, and the animal soon returned to him. He made a feint, as if he were about to strike his spike between its eyes. The boar not feeling a wound, which had not been inflicted, and very irritated, rushed at him, and he buried his spear a foot deep between its shoulders. The beast made one fearful struggle, and then fell down quite dead. The fawn-coloured bitch, though terribly wounded, gave a loud bark; and even the other dog, which Vivian thought had been long dead, testified its triumphant joy by an almost inarticulate groan. As soon as he was convinced that the boar was really dead, Vivian hastened to the huntsman, and expressed his hope that he was not seriously hurt.

"A trifle, a trifle, which our surgeon, who is used to these affairs, will quickly cure—Sir! we owe you our life!" said the huntsman, with great dignity, as Vivian assisted him in rising from the ground. He was a tall man, of imposing appearance; but his dress, which was the usual hunting costume of a German nobleman, did not indicate his quality.

"Sir, we owe you our life!" repeated the stranger; "five minutes more, and our son must have reigned in Little Lilliput."

"I have the honour then of addressing your serene highness. Far from being indebted to me, I feel that I ought to apologize for having so unceremoniously joined in your sport."

"Nonsense, man, nonsense! We have killed in our time too many of these gentlemen, to be ashamed of owning that, had it not been for you, one of them would at last have revenged the species. But many as are the boars that we have killed or eaten, we never saw a more furious or more powerful animal than the present. Why, sir, you must be one of the best hands at the spear in all Christendom!"

"Indifferently good, your highness: your highness forgets that the animal was already exhausted by your assault."

"Why, there's something in that; but it was neatly done, man—it was neatly done.—You're fond of the sport, we think?"

"I have had some practice, but illness has

so weakened me that I have given up the forest."

"Indeed! pity, pity, pity! and on a second examination, we observe that you are no hunter. This coat is not for the free forest; but how came you by the pike?"

"I am travelling to the next post town, to which I have sent on my luggage. I am getting fast to the south; and as for this pike, my servant got it this morning from some peasant in a brawl, and was showing it to me when I heard your highness call. I really think now that Providence must have sent it. I certainly could not have done you much service with my riding whip—Hilloa! Esser, Esser, where are you?"

"Here, noble sir! here, here—why what have you got there? The horses have jibbed, and will not stir—I can stay no longer—they may go to the devil!" So saying, Vivian's valet dashed over the underwood, and leaped at the foot of the prince.

"In God's name, is this thy servant?" asked his highness.

"In good faith am I," said Esser; "his valet, his cook, and his secretary, all in one; and also his jagd junker, or gentilhomme de la chasse—as a puppy with a bugle horn told me this morning."

"A very merry knave!" said the prince; "and talking of a puppy with a bugle horn, reminds us how unaccountably we have been deserted to-day by a suite that never yet were wanting. We are indeed astonished. Our bugle, we fear, has turned traitor." So saying, the prince executed a blast with great skill, which Vivian immediately recognised as the one which Esser George had so admirably imitated.

"And now, my good friend," said the prince, "we cannot hear of your passing through our land, without visiting our good castle. We would that we could better testify the obligation which we feel under to you, in any other way than by the offer of a hospitality which all gentlemen, by right, can command. But your presence would, indeed, give us sincere pleasure. You must not refuse us. Your looks, as well as your prowess, prove your blood; and we are quite sure no cloth-merchant's order will suffer by your not hurrying to your proposed point of destination. We are not wrong, we think,—though your accent is good,—in supposing that we are conversing with an English gentleman. But here they come."

As he spoke, three or four horsemen, at the head of whom was the young huntsman whom the travellers had met in the morning, sprang into the glade.

"Why, Arnelm!" said the prince, "when before was the jagd junker's car so bad that he could not discover his master's bugle, even though the wind were against him?"

"In truth, your highness, we have heard bugles enough this morning. Who is violating the forest laws, we know not; but that another bugle is sounding, and played,—St. Hubert forgive me for saying so,—with as great skill as your highness', is certain. Myself, Von Neuwied, and Lintz, have been galloping over the whole forest. The rest, I doubt not, will be up directly." The jagd junker *blew his own bugle*.

In the course of five minutes about twenty other horsemen, all dressed in the same uniform, had arrived; all complaining of their wild

chases after the prince in every other part of the forest.

"It must be the Wild Huntsman himself!" swore an old hand. This solution of the mystery satisfied all.

"Well, well!" said the prince; "whoever it may be, had it not been for the timely presence of this gentleman, you must have changed your green jackets for mourning coats, and our bugle would have sounded no more in the forests of our fathers. Here, Arnelm!—cut up the beast,—and remember that the left shoulder is the quarter of honour, and belongs to this stranger;—not less honoured because unknown."

All present took off their caps and bowed to Vivian; who took this opportunity of informing the prince who he was.

"And now," continued his highness, "Mr. Grey will accompany us to our castle;—nay, sir, we can take no refusal. We will send on to the town for your luggage. Arnelm, do you look to this!—And, honest friend!" said the prince, turning to Esser George,—"we commend you to the special care of our friend Von Neuwied,—and so, gentlemen, with stout hearts and spurs to your steeds—to the castle!"

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE cavalcade proceeded for some time at a very brisk but irregular pace, until they arrived at a less wild and wooded part of the forest. The Prince of Little Lilliput reined in his steed as he entered a very broad avenue of purple beeches, at the end of which, though at a considerable distance, Vivian perceived the towers and turrets of a Gothic edifice glittering in the sunshine.

"Welcome to Turripurva!" said his highness.

"I assure your highness," said Vivian, "that I view with no unpleasant feeling, the prospect of a reception in any civilized mansion; for to say the truth, for the last eight-and-forty hours, Fortune has not favoured me either in my researches after a bed, or that which some think still more important than nightly repose."

"Is it so?" said the prince; "why, we should have thought by your home-thrust this morning, that you were as fresh as the early lark. In good faith, it was a pretty stroke! And whence come you then, good sir?"

"Know you a most insane and drunken idiot, who styles himself the Grand-duke of Schom Johannisberger?"

"No, no!" said the prince, staring in Vivian's face very earnestly, and then bursting into a loud fit of laughter; "No, no, it cannot be! hah! hah! hah! but it is, though; and you have actually fallen among that mad crew. Hah! hah! hah! a most excellent adventure! Arnelm! why, now, where art thou? ride up, ride up! Behold in the person of this gentleman a new victim to the overwhelming hospitality of our uncle of the Wines. And did they confer a title on you on the spot? Say, art thou elector, or palgrave, or baron; or, failing in thy devoirs, as once did our good cousin Arnelm, confess that thou wert ordained with becoming reverence, the Archprioste of Puddle-drink. Eh! Arnelm, is not that the style thou bearest at the Palace of the Wines?"

"So it would seem, your highness. I think the title was conferred on me the same night that your highness mistook the grand duke's proboscis for Theron's horn, and committed treason not yet pardoned."

"Hah! hah! hah! good! good! good! thou art us there. Truly a good memory is often as ready a friend as a sharp wit. Wit is not thy strong point, friend Arnelm; and yet it is strange, that in the sharp encounter of ready tongues and the logomachies, thou hast sometimes the advantage. But, nevertheless, rest assured, good cousin Arnelm, that wit is not thy strong point."

"It is well for me that all are not of the same opinion as your serene highness;" said the young esquire junker, somewhat nettled; for he prided himself peculiarly on his repartees.

The prince was exceedingly diverted with Vivian's account of his last night's adventure; and our hero learned from his highness, that his late visit was no less a personage than the cousin of the Prince of Little Lilliput, an old German baron, who passed his time with some neighbours of congenial temperament, in hunting the wild boar in the morning, and speculating on the flavours of the fine Rhenish wines during the rest of the day. "He and his companions," continued the prince, "will enable you to form a tolerably accurate idea of the character of the German nobility half a century ago. The debauch of last night was the usual carouse which crowned the exploits of each lay when we were a boy. The revolution has rendered all these customs obsolete. Would that it had not sent some other things equally out of fashion!"

At this moment the prince sounded his bugle, and the gates of the castle, which were not more than twenty yards distant, were immediately thrown open. The whole cavalcade set spurs to their steeds, and dashed at full gallop over the hollow-sounding drawbridge, into the court-yard of the castle. A crowd of serving-men in green liveries, instantly appeared; and Arnelm and Von Neuweid, jumping from their saddles, respectively held the stirrup and the bridle of the prince as he dismounted.

"Where is Master Rodolph?" asked his highness, with a loud voice.

"So please your serene highness, I am here!" answered a very thin treble; and bustling through the surrounding crowd, came forward the owner of the voice. Master Rodolph was not above five feet high, but he was nearly as broad as he was long. Though more than middle-aged, an almost infantile smile played upon his broad fair face; to which his small turn-up nose, large green, goggle eyes, and unmeaning mouth, gave no expression. His long air hung over his shoulders, the flaxen locks in some places maturing into gray. In compliance with the taste of his master, this most unsportsmanlike-looking steward was clad in a green jerkin, on the right arm of which was embroidered a giant's head—the crest of the Little Lilliputs.

"Truly, Rodolph, we have received some scratch in the chase to-day, and need your assistance. The rest of surgeons, we assure you, Mr. Grey, if you require one:—and look you that the blue chamber is prepared for this gentleman; and we shall have need of our cabinet this evening. See that all his be done, and inform Prince Maximilian that we would speak with him. And look you, Master Rodolph, there is one in this company,—what call

you your servant's name, sir!—Easper George! 'tis well: look you, Rodolph, see that our friend Easper George be well provided for. We know that we can trust him to your good care. And now, gentlemen, at sunset we meet in the Giant's Hall." So saying, his highness bowed to the party; and taking Vivian by the arm, and followed by Arnelm and Von Neuweid, he ascended a staircase which opened into the court, and then mounted into a covered gallery which ran round the whole building. The interior wall of the gallery was alternately ornamented with stags' heads, or other trophies of the chase, and coats of arms blazoned in stucco. The prince did the honours of the castle to Vivian with great courtesy. The armoury, and the hall, the knight's chamber, and even the donjon-keep were all examined; and when Vivian had sufficiently admired the antiquity of the structure, and the beauty of the situation, the prince, having proceeded down a long corridor, opened the door into a small chamber which he introduced to Vivian as his cabinet. The furniture of this room was rather quaint, and not unpleasing. The wainscot and ceiling were painted alike, of a very light green colour, and were richly carved and gilt. The walls were hung with dark green velvet, of which costly material were also the chairs and a sofa, which was placed under a large and curiously cut looking-glass. The lower panes of the windows of this room were of stained glass, of the most vivid tints; but the upper panes were untinged, in order that the light should not be disturbed which fell through them upon two magnificent pictures; one a hunting piece by Schneiders, and the other a portrait of an armed chieftain on horseback, by Lucas Cranch.

And now the door opened, and Master Rodolph entered, carrying in his hand a white wand, and bowing very reverently as he ushered in two servants bearing a cold collation. As he entered, it was with difficulty that he could settle his countenance into the due and requisite degree of gravity; and so often was the fat steward on the point of bursting into laughter, as he arranged the setting out of the refreshments on the table, that the prince, with whom he was, at the same time, both a favourite and a butt, at last noticed his unusual and unmanageable risibility.

"Why, Rodolph, what ails thee? hast thou just discovered the point of some good saying of yesterday?"

The steward could now contain his laughter no longer, and he gave vent to his emotion in a most treble "He! he! he!"

"Speak, man, in the name of St. Hubert, and on the word of as stout a huntsman as ever yet crossed horse. Speak, we say, what ails thee?"

"He! he! he! in truth, a most comical knave! I beg your serene highness ten thousand pardons, but in truth a more comical knave did I never see. How call you him? Easper George, I think, he! he! he! In truth, your highness was right when you styled him a merry knave—in truth a most comical knave—he! he! he! a very funny knave! he! he! he! He says, your highness, that I'm like a snake in a consumption!—he! he! he! in truth a most comical knave!"

"Well, Rodolph, as long as you do not quarrel with his jokes they shall pass as true wit. But why comes not our son? Have you bidden the Prince Maximilian to our presence?"

"In truth have I, your highness; but he was engaged at the moment with Mr. Sievers, and therefore he could not immediately attend my bidding; nevertheless, he bade me deliver to your serene highness his dutiful affection; saying, that he would soon have the honour of bending his knee unto your serene highness."

"He never said any such nonsense. At least, if he did, he must be much changed since last we hunted."

"In truth, your highness, I cannot avert upon my conscience as a faithful steward, that such were the precise words and exact phraseology of his highness, the Prince Maximilian. But in the time of the good prince, your father, whose memory be ever blessed, such were the words and style of message, which I was schooled and instructed by Mr. Von Lexicon, your serene highness's most honoured tutor, to bear unto the good prince your father, whose memory be ever blessed; when I had the great fortune of being your serene highness's most particular page, and it fell to my lot to have the pleasant duty of informing the good prince, your father, whose memory be ever blessed—"

"Enough! enough! but Sievers is not Von Lexicon, and Maximilian, we trust, is—"

"Papa! papa!—dearest papa!" shouted a young lad, as he dashed open the door; and rushing into the room, threw his arms around the prince's neck.

"My darling!" said the father, forgetting at this moment of genuine feeling, the pompous plural in which he had hitherto spoken of himself. The prince fondly kissed his child. The boy was about ten years of age, exquisitely handsome. Courage, not audacity, was imprinted on his noble features.

"Papa! may I hunt with you to-morrow?"

"What says Mr. Sievers?"

"O! Mr. Sievers says I am an excellent fellow; I assure you upon my honour he does. I heard you come home; but though I was dying to see you, I would not run out till I had finished my Roman History. I say! papa! what a grand fellow Brutus was—what a grand thing it is to be a patriot! I intend to be a patriot myself, and to kill the Grand-duke of Reisenberg. Papa, who's that?"

"My friend, Max, Mr. Grey. Speak to him."

"I am very happy to see you at Turriparva, sir," said the boy, bowing to Vivian with great dignity. "Have you been hunting with his highness this morning?"

"I can hardly say I have."

"Max, I have received a slight wound to-day.—Don't look alarmed—it is very slight. I only mention it, because had it not been for this gentleman, it is very probable you would never have seen your father again. He has saved my life!"

"Saved your life! saved my papa's life!" said the young prince, seizing Vivian's hand—"O! sir, what can I do for you? Mr. Sievers!" said the boy, with great eagerness, to a gentleman who entered the room—"Mr. Sievers! here is a young lord who has saved papa's life!"

Mr. Sievers was a very tall, thin man, perhaps about forty, with a clear sallow complexion, a high forehead, on which a few wrinkles were visible, very bright keen eyes, narrow arched brows, and a quantity of gray curling hair, which was combed back off his forehead, and fell down over his shoulders. He was instantly introduced to Vivian as the prince's most particular friend; and then he

listened, apparently with great interest, to his highness's narrative of the morning's adventure; his danger, and his rescue. Young Maximilian never took his large, dark-blue eyes off his father while he was speaking; and when he had finished, the boy rushed to Vivian, and threw his arms round his neck. Vivian was delighted with the affection of the child, who whispered to him, in a low voice—"I know what you are!"

"What, my young friend?"

"Ah! I know."

"But tell me!"

"You thought I shouldn't find out:—you're a patriot!"

"I hope I am," said Vivian; "but travelling in a foreign country is hardly a proof of it. Perhaps you do not know that I am an Englishman."

"An Englishman!" said the child, with an air of great disappointment—"I thought you were a patriot! I am one. Do you know, I'll tell you a secret. You must promise not to tell, though—Promise—upon your word! Well, then," said the urchin, whispering with great energy in Vivian's ear, through his hollow fist:—"I hate the Grand-duke of Reisenberg, and I mean to stab him to the heart;" so saying, the little prince, grated his teeth with an expression of the most bitter detestation.

"What the devil is the matter with the child?" thought Vivian; but at this moment his conversation with him was interrupted.

"Am I to believe this young gentleman, my dear Sievers," asked the prince, "when he tells me that his conduct has met your approbation?"

"Your son, prince," answered Mr. Sievers, "can only speak truth. His excellence is proved by my praising him to his face."

The young Maximilian, when Mr. Sievers had ceased speaking, stood blushing, with his eyes fixed on the ground; and the delighted parent catching his child up in his arms, embraced him with unaffected fondness.

"And now, all this time Master Rodolph is waiting for his patient. By St. Hubert, you can none of you think me very ill! Your pardon, Mr. Grey, for leaving you. My friend Sievers will, I am sure, be delighted to make you feel at ease at Turriparva. Max, come with me!"

Vivian found in Mr. Sievers a very interesting companion; nothing of the pedant, and much of the philosopher. Their conversation was of course chiefly on topics of local interest, anecdotes of the castle and the country, of Vivian's friends, the drunken Johannisberger and his crew, and such matters; but there was a keenness of satire in some of Mr. Sievers's observations which was highly amusing, and enough passed to make Vivian desire opportunities of conversing with him at greater length, and on subjects of greater interest. They were at present disturbed by Essper George entering the room to inform Vivian that his luggage had arrived from the village; and that the blue chamber was now prepared for his presence.

"We shall meet, I suppose, in the hall, Mr. Sievers?"

"No, I shall not dine there. If you remain at Turriparva, which I trust you will, I shall be happy to see you in my room. If it have no other inducement to gain it the honour of your visit, it has here, at least, the recommendation of singularity; there is, at any rate, no other chamber like it in this good castle."

The business of the toilet is sooner performed a hunting party in a German forest, than for a dinner at Château Desir; and Vivian was dy long before he was summoned.

"His serene highness has commenced his prom towards the hall," announced Esser George Vivian, in a very treble voice, and bowing with ceremony as he offered to lead the way, with a long white wand waving in his right hand.

"I shall attend his highness," said his master; but before I do, if that white wand be not immediately laid aside, it will be broken at your back."

"Broken about my back! what, the wand of office your highness' steward! Master Rodolph says it, in truth, a steward is but half himself who th not his wand. Methinks when his rod of ice is wanting, his Highness of Lilliput's steward but unequally divided. In truth he is stout ough to be Aaron's wand, that swallowed up all rest. But has your nobleness really any serious jection to my carrying a wand? It gives such an

"I really thought your highness could have no ous objection. It cost me a good hour's talking th Master Rodolph to gain his permission. I was liged to swear that he was a foot taller than my- f, ere he would consent; and then only on the adition that my wand should be full twelve thes shorter than his own. The more's the pity," ntinued Esser: "it spoils the sport, and makes e seem but half a steward after all. By the our of my mother! it shall go hard with me if do not pick the pith of his rush this night! velve inches shorter! you must have a conscience, ater Rodolph!"

"Come, come, silence! and no more of this frip-ry."

"No, your highness, not a word, not a word;—t twelve inches, your highness—twelve inches ater, what do you think of that? Twelve inches ater than Master Rodolph's—Master Rodolph, ooth!—Master Treble-Paunch! If he had as ch brains in his head, as he has something else his body, why then, your highness——"

"No more, no more!"

"Not a word, not a word, your highness! Not vord should your highness ever have heard, but the confounded folly of this goggle-eyed gander a steward:—twelve inches, in good truth!—hy, twelve inches, your highness—twelve inches no trifle—twelve inches is a size—twelve inches only six shorter than the Grand-duke of Schoss hannisberger's nose."

"It matters little, Esser, for I shall tolerate no th absurdities."

"Your highness is the best judge—it isn't for me differ with your highness. I am not arguing for wand; I am only saying, your highness, that if t overgrown anchovy, whom they call Master doph had shown a little more sense upon the asion, why then I should have had a better nion of his judgment; as it is, the day he can e the morrow of Easter eve, I'll make a house ward of a Michaelmas goose."

The Giants' Hall was a Gothic chamber of im- ing appearance. The oaken rafters of the cur- ly carved roof rested on the grim heads of antic figures of the same material. These statues eoded the length of the hall on each side; they e elaborately sculptured and highly polished, e each one held in its outstretched arm a blazing aromatic torch. Above them, small windows

of painted glass admitted a light which was no longer necessary at the banquet to which I am now about to introduce the reader. Over the great entrance doors was a gallery, from which a band of trumpeters, arrayed in ample robes of flowing scarlet, sent forth many a festive and martial strain. More than fifty individuals, all wearing hunting-dresses of green cloth on which the giant's head was carefully emblazoned, were already seated in the hall when Vivian entered. He was conducted to the upper part of the chamber, and a seat was allotted him on the left hand of the prince. His highness had not arrived, but a chair of state, placed under a crimson canopy, denoted the style of its absent owner; and a stool, covered with velvet of the same regal colour and glistening with gold lace, announced that the presence of Prince Maximilian was expected. While Vivian was musing in astonishment at the evident affectation of royal pomp which pervaded the whole establishment of the Prince of Little Lilliput, the trumpeters in the gallery suddenly commenced a triumphant flourish. All rose as the princely procession entered the hall. First came Master Rodolph, twirling his white wand with the practised pride of a drum-major, and looking as pompous as a turkey-cock in a storm. Six footmen in splendid liveries, two by two, immediately followed him. A page heralded the Prince Maximilian, and then came the serene father; the jagd junker, and four or five other gentlemen of the court formed the suite.

His highness ascended the throne, Prince Maximilian was on his right, and Vivian had the high honour of the left hand; the jagd junker seated himself next to our hero. The table was profusely covered, chiefly with the sports of the forest, and the celebrated wild boar was not forgotten. Few minutes had elapsed ere Vivian perceived that his highness was always served on bended knee. Surprised at this custom, which even the highest and most despotic monarchs seldom exact, and still more surprised at the contrast which all this state afforded to the natural ease and affable amiability of the prince, Vivian ventured to ask his neighbour Arnelm whether the banquet of to-day was in celebration of any particular event of general or individual interest.

"By no means," said the jagd junker; "this is the usual style of the prince's daily meal, except that to-day there is perhaps rather less state and fewer guests than usual; in consequence of many of our fellow-subjects having left us with the purpose of attending a great hunting party, which is now being held in the dominions of his highness' cousin, the Duke of Micromegas."

When the more necessary, but, as most hold, the less delightful part of banquetting was over, and the numerous serving-men had removed the more numerous dishes of wild boar, red deer, kid, and winged game; a stiff Calvinistic-looking personage rose, and delivered a long, and most grateful grace, to which the sturdy huntsmen listened with a due mixture of piety and impatience. When his starch reverence, who, in his black coat, looked among the huntsmen very like, as Esser George observed, a blackbird among a set of moulting canaries, had finished,—an old man, with long snow-white hair, and a beard of the same colour, rose from his seat; and with a glass in his hand, bowing first to his highness with great respect, and then to his companions with an air of condescension, gave in a

stout voice, "The prince!" A loud shout was immediately raised, and all quaffed with rapture the health of a ruler whom evidently they adored. Master Rodolph now brought forward an immense silver goblet, full of some crafty compound, from its odour doubtless delicious. The prince held the goblet by its two massy handles, and then said in a loud voice:—

"My friends! the Giant's Head! and he who sneers at its frowns, may he rue its bristles!"

The toast was welcomed with a loud cry of triumph. When the noise had subsided, the jared junker rose; and prefacing the intended pledge by a few observations, as remarkable for the delicacy of their sentiments as the elegance of their expression, he gave, pointing to Vivian, "The guest! and may the prince never want a stout arm at a strong push!" The sentiment was again echoed by the lusty voice of all present, and particularly by his highness. As Vivian shortly returned thanks and modestly apologized for the German of a foreigner, he could not refrain from remembering the last time when he was placed in the same situation. It was when the treacherous Earl of Courtown had drank success to Mr. Vivian Grey's maiden speech in a bumper of claret, at the political orgies of Château Desir. Could he really, in very fact, be the same individual as the bold, dashing, fearless youth, who then organized the crazy councils of those ambitious, imbecile graybeards? What was he then? What had happened since? What was he now? He turned from the comparison with feelings of sickening disgust, and it was with difficulty that his countenance could assume the due degree of hilarity which befitted the present occasion.

"Truly, Mr. Grey," said the prince; "your German would pass current at Weimar. Arnelm, good cousin Arnelm, we must trouble thy affectionate duty to marshal and regulate the drinking devoirs of our kind subjects to-night; for by the advice of our trusty surgeon, Master Rodolph, of much fame, we shall refrain this night from our accustomed potations, and betake ourselves to the solitude of our cabinet—a solitude, in good sooth, unless we can persuade you to accompany us, kind sir," said the prince, turning to Mr. Grey. "Methinks eight-and-forty hours without rest, and a good part spent in the mad walls of our cousin of Johannisberger, are hardly the best preparatives for a drinking bout. Unless, after Oberon's horn, ye may fairly be considered to be in practice. Nevertheless, I advise the cabinet and a cup of Rodolph's coffee. What sayest thou?" Vivian acceded to the prince's proposition with eager pleasure; and accompanied by Prince Maximilian, and preceded by the little steward, who, surrounded by his serving-men, very much resembled a planet eclipsed by his satellites, they left the hall.

"'Tis almost a pity to shut out the moon on such a night," said the prince, as he drew a large green velvet curtain from the windows of the cabinet.

"'Tis certainly a magnificent night!" said Vivian; "How fine the effect of the light is upon the picture of the warrior. I declare the horse seems quite living, and its fierce rider actually frowns upon us."

"He may well frown," said the Prince of Little Lilliput, in a voice of deep melancholy; and he hastily redrew the curtain. In a moment he started from the chair on which he had just seated himself,

and again admitted the moonlight. "Am I really afraid of an old picture? No, no, it has not yet come to that."

This was uttered in a very distinct voice, and of course excited the astonishment of Vivian, who, however, had too much discretion to evince his surprise, or to take any measure by which his curiosity might be satisfied.

His companion seemed instantly conscious of the seeming singularity of his expression.

"You are surprised at my words, good sir," said his highness, as he paced very rapidly up and down the small chamber; "You are surprised at my words; but, sir, my ancestor's brow was guarded by a diadem!"

"Which was then well won, prince, and is now worthily worn."

"By whom? where? how?" asked the prince, in a very rapid voice. "Maximilian," continued his highness, in a more subdued tone; "Maximilian, my own love, leave us—go to Mr. Sievers—God bless you, my only boy—good night!"

"Good night, dearest papa, and down with the Grand-duke of Reisenberg!"

"He echoes the foolish zeal of my fond followers," said the prince, as his son left the room. "The idle parade to which their illegal loyalty still clings—my own manners, the relics of former days—habits will not change like stations—all these have deceived you, sir. You have mistaken me for a monarch; I should be one. A curse light on me the hour I can mention it without a burning blush. Oh, shame!—shame on the blood of my father's son! Can my mouth own that I once was one! Yes, sir! you see before you the most injured, the least enviable of human beings—I am a MEDIATISED PRINCE!"

Vivian had resided too long in Germany to be ignorant of the meaning of this title; with which, as most probably few of my readers are acquainted, I may be allowed for a moment to disturb the tête-à-tête in the cabinet—merely, as a wordy and windy orator preliminarily protests, when he is about to bore the house with a harangue of five hours—merely to say, "just one single word." A mediatised prince is an unhappy victim of those congresses, which, among other good and evil, purged with great effect the ancient German political system. By the regulations then determined on, that country was freed at one fell swoop from the venetious and harassing dominion of the various petty princes who exercised absolute sovereignties over little nations of fifty thousand souls. These independent sovereigns became subjects; and either swelled, by their mediatisation, the territories of some already powerful potentate, or transmuted into a state of importance some more fortunate pretty ruler than themselves; whose independence, through the exertions of political intrigue or family influence, had been preserved inviolate. In most instances, the concurrence of these little rulers in their worldly degradation was obtained by a lavish grant of official emoluments or increase of territorial possession.—and the mediatised prince, instead of being an impoverished and uninfluential sovereign, became a wealthy and powerful subject. But so dominant in the heart of man is the love of independent dominion, that even with these temptations, few of the petty princes could have been induced to have parted with their cherished sceptres, had they not been conscious, that in case of calamity,

resolutions of a diet would have been enforced the armies of an emperor. As it is, few of them have yet given up the outward and visible signs of regal sway. The throne is still preserved, and the crown still revered. They seldom frequent the courts of their sovereigns, and scarcely condescend to notice the attentions of their fellow-nobility. Most of them expend their increased revenue in maintaining the splendour of their little courts at their ancient capitals; or in swelling the ranks of their retainers at their solitary forest-castles.

The Prince of Little Lilliput was the first meditated sovereign that Vivian had ever met. At another time, and under other circumstances, he might have smiled at the idle parade and useless pomp which he had this day witnessed; or morosed on that weakness of human nature which seemed to consider the inconvenient appendages of a throne, as the great end for which power was coveted; but at the present moment he only was a kind, and, as he believed, estimable individual disquieted and distressed. It was painful to witness the agitation of the prince; and Vivian felt necessary to make some observations, which from a manner expressed much, though in fact they meant nothing.

"Sir," said his highness; "your sympathy consoles me. Do not imagine that I can misunderstand it—it does you honour. You add, by this, to the many favours you have already conferred on me, by saving my life and accepting my hospitality. I sincerely hope, that your departure hence will be postponed to the last possible moment. Your conversation and your company have made me pass a more cheerful day than I am accustomed to. I here love me; but with the exception of Siem, I have no companion; and although I esteem his principles and his talents, there is no congeni-
city in our tastes, or in our tempers. As for the rest, a more devoted band cannot be conceived; but they think only of one thing—the lost dignity of their ruler; and although this concentration of their thoughts on one subject may gratify my pride, it does not elevate my spirits. But this is a subject on which in future we will not converse. One of the curses of my unhappy lot is, that a thousand circumstances daily occur which prevent me forgetting it."

The prince rose from the table, and pressing with his right hand on part of the wall, the door of a small closet sprang open. The interior was lined with crimson velvet. He took out of it a crimson velvet cushion of the same regal material, on which posed, in solitary magnificence, a golden coronet, and antique workmanship.

"The crown of my fathers!" said his highness, as he placed the treasure, with great reverence, on the table; "won by fifty battles and lost without a blow! Yet, in my youth I was deemed no dastard: and I have shed more blood for my country in one year, than he who claims to be my suzerain, in the hole of his long career of undeserved prosperity. Why! this, this is the curse—the ancestor of my present sovereign was that warrior's serf!" The prince pointed to the grim chieftain, whose stout helmet Vivian now perceived was encircled by a wreath, exactly similar to the one which was lying before him. "Had I been the subject—had I been obliged to acknowledge the sway of a Cæsar, I might have endured it with resignation:—had I been forced to yield to the legions of an emperor,

a noble resistance might have consoled me for the clanking of my chains; but to sink without a struggle, the victim of political intrigue—to become the bondsman of one who was my father's slave; for such was Reisenberg—even in my own remembrance our unsuccessful rival. This, this was too bad; it rankles in my heart; and unless revenged, I shall sink under it. To have lost my dominions would have been nothing. But revenge I will have! It is yet in my power to gain for an enslaved people the liberty I have myself lost. Yes! the enlightened spirit of the age shall yet shake the quivering councils of the Reisenberg cabal. I will, in truth I have already seconded the just, the unanswerable demands of an oppressed and insulted people; and ere six months are over, I trust to see the convocation of a free and representative council, in the capital of the petty monarch to whom I have been betrayed. The chief of Reisenberg has, in his eagerness to gain his grand-ducal crown, somewhat overstepped the mark.

"Besides myself, there are no less than three other powerful princes, whose dominions have been devoted to the formation of his servile dutchy. We are all animated by the same spirit,—all intent upon the same end. We have all used, and are using, our influence as powerful nobles, to gain for our fellow-subjects their withheld rights,—rights which belong to them as men, not merely as Germans. Within this week I have forwarded to the Residence a memorial subscribed by myself, my relatives, the other princes, and a powerful body of discontented nobles; requesting the immediate grant of a constitution similar to those of Wirtemberg and Bavaria. My companions in misfortune are inspired by my joining them. Had I been wise, I should have joined them sooner; but until this moment, I have been the dupe of the artful conduct of an unprincipled minister. My eyes, however, are now open. The grand-duke and his crafty counsellor, whose name shall not profane my lips, already tremble. Part of the people, emboldened by our representations, have already refused to answer an unconstitutional taxation. I have no doubt that he must yield. Whatever may be the inclination of the courts of Vienna or St. Petersburg, rest assured that the liberty of Germany will meet with no opponent except political intrigue; and that Metternich is too well acquainted with the spirit which is now only slumbering in the bosom of the German nation, to run the slightest risk of exciting it by the presence of foreign legions. No, no! that mode of treatment may do very well for Naples, or Poland, or Spain; but the moment that a Croat or a Cossack shall encamp upon the Rhine or the Elbe, for the purpose of supporting the unadulterated tyranny of their new-fangled grand-dukes, that moment Germany becomes a great and united nation. The greatest enemy of the prosperity of Germany is the natural disposition of her sons; but that disposition, while it does now, and may forever, hinder us from being a great people, will at the same time infallibly prevent us from ever becoming a degraded one."

At this moment, this moment of pleasing anticipation of public virtue and private revenge, Master Rodolph entered, and prevented Vivian from gaining any details of the history of his host. The little round steward informed his master that a horseman had just arrived, bearing for his highness a

despatch of importance, which he insisted upon delivering into the prince's own hands.

"Whence comes he?" asked his highness.

"In truth, your serene highness, that were hard to say,—inasmuch as the messenger refuses to inform us."

"Admit him."

A man, whose jaded looks proved that he had travelled far that day, was soon ushered into the room; and, bowing to the prince, delivered to him, in silence, a letter.

"From whom comes this?" asked the prince.

"It will itself inform your highness," was the only answer.

"My friend, you are a trusty messenger, and have been well trained. Rodolph, look that this gentleman be well lodged and attended."

"I thank your highness," said the messenger, "but I do not tarry here. I wait no answer, and my only purpose in seeing you was to perform my commission to the letter, by delivering this paper into your own hands."

"As you please, sir; you must be the best judge of your own time; but we like not strangers to leave our gates while our drawbridge is yet echoing with their entrance steps."

The prince and Vivian were again alone. Astonishment and agitation were very visible on his highness' countenance as he dashed his eye over the letter. At length he folded it up, put it into his breast pocket, and tried to resume conversation; but the effort was both evident and unsuccessful. In another moment the letter was again taken out, and again read with not less emotion than accompanied its first perusal.

"I fear I have wearied you, Mr. Grey," said his highness; "it was inconsiderate in me not to remember that you require repose."

Vivian was not sorry to have an opportunity of retiring, so he quickly took the hint, and wished his highness agreeable dreams.

CHAPTER XIX.

No one but an adventurous traveller can know the luxury of sleep. There is not a greater fallacy in the world than the common creed that "sweet sleep is labour's guerdon." Mere regular, corporeal labour certainly procures us a good, sound, refreshing slumber, disturbed often by the consciousness of the monotonous duties of the morrow:—but how sleep the other great labourers of this laborious world? Where is the sweet sleep of the politician? After hours of fatigue in his office, and hours of exhaustion in the House, he gains his pillow; and a brief, feverish night, disturbed by the triumph of a cheer and the horrors of a reply. Where is the sweet sleep of the poet, or the novelist? We all know how harassing are the common dreams which are made up of incoherent images of our daily life, in which the actors are individuals that we know, and whose conduct generally appears to be regulated by principles which we can comprehend. How much more enervating and destroying must be the slumber of that man who dreams of an imaginary world! waking, with a heated and excited spirit, to mourn over some impressive incident of the night, which is nevertheless

forgotten; or to collect some inexplicable plot which has been revealed in sleep, and has fled from the memory as the eyelids have opened. Where is the sweet sleep of an artist?—of the lawyer! Where, indeed, of any human being to whom the morrow brings its necessary duties? Sleep is the enemy of care, and care is the constant companion of regular labour, mental or bodily.

But your traveller, your adventurous traveller—careless of the future, reckless of the past—with a mind interested by the world, from the immense and various character which that world presents to him, and not by his own stake in any petty or particular contingency; wearied by delightful fatigue, daily occasioned by varying means, and from varying causes; with the consciousness that no precedence can regulate the fortunes of the morrow, and with no curiosity to discover what those fortunes may be, from a conviction that it is utterly impossible to ascertain them; perfectly easy whether he lie in a mountain-hut or a royal palace; and regardless alike of the terrors and chances of storm and bandits; seeing that he has as fair a chance of meeting both with security and enjoyment—this is the fellow, who throwing his body upon a down couch or his mule's packsaddle, with equal eagerness and equal sang-froid sinks into a repose, in which he is never reminded by the remembrance of an appointment or an engagement for the next day, a duel, a marriage, or a dinner, the three perils of man, that he has the misfortune of being mortal; and wakes, not to combat care, but only to feel that he is fresher and more vigorous than he was the night before; and that come what come may, he is, at any rate, sure this day of seeing different faces, and of improvising his unpremeditated part upon a different scene.

I have now both philosophically accounted, and politely apologized, for the loud and unfashionable snore which sounded in the blue chamber about five minutes after Vivian Grey had entered that most comfortable apartment. In about twelve hours time, he was scolding Esasper George for having presumed to wake him so early, quite unconscious that he had enjoyed any thing more than a twenty minutes' doze.

"I should not have come in, sir, only they are all out. They were off by six o'clock this morning, sir; most part at least. The prince has gone; I don't know whether he went with them, but Master Rodolph has given me—I breakfasted with Master Rodolph.—Holy Virgin! your highness, what quarters we have got into; the finest venison pasties, corned beef, hare soup, cherry sauce—"

"To the point, to the point, my good Esasper; what of the prince?"

"His highness has left the castle, and desired Master Rodolph—if your grace had only seen Master Rodolph tipsy last night: hah! hah! hah! he rolled about like a turbot in a tornado."

"What of the prince, Esasper; what of the prince?"

"His highness, your grace, has left the castle; and Master Rodolph, who, by-the-by—"

"No more of Master Rodolph, sir; what of the prince?"

"Your highness won't hear me. The prince desired Master Rodolph—if your highness had only seen him last night—I beg pardon, I beg pardon—the prince, God bless him for his breakfast; the finest venison pasties, corned beef, hare soup, cherry

e—I beg pardon, I beg pardon—the prince de—this letter to be given to your highness.”

Vivian read the note, which supposed that, of course, he would not wish to join the chase this morning, and regretted that the writer was obliged to be out for a few hours to visit a neighbouring estate, but requested the pleasure of his guest's company at a private dinner in the cabinet, on his return.

After breakfast Vivian called on Mr. Sievers. He found that gentleman busied in his library.

“These are companions, Mr. Grey,” said he, pointing to his well-stored shelves, “that I ever find resting. I hope, from the mysterious account of my retreat which I gave you yesterday, that you do not expect to be introduced to the sanctum of an old conjurer; but the truth is, the cell of a man cannot excite more wonder at Turripurva than does the library of a scholar.”

“I assure you, sir,” said Vivian, “that nothing in the world could give me greater pleasure than to spend a morning with you in this retreat. Though I have bred in a library, my life, for the last twenty years, has been of so very adventurous a nature, that I have seldom had the opportunity of recurring to those studies which once alone occupied my thoughts; and your collection, too, is quite after my taste—politics and philosophy.”

Vivian was sincere in his declaration, and he had for a long time passed a couple of hours with a delight that he did this morning with Mr. Sievers; who, at the same time that he was a perceptor of principles, was also a due reverencer of facts: a philosophical antiquary, in the widest and worthiest acceptation of the title; one who extracted from the deep knowledge of the past beneficial instruction for the present.

“Come,” said Mr. Sievers, “enough of the superstitions of the middle ages; after all, *superstition* is a word that it hardly becomes a philosopher to use: nothing is more fatal in disquisition than terms which cannot be defined, and to which different things are attached, according to the different opinions of different persons. A friend of mine once promised to give us a volume on ‘The modes of relief of the Middle Ages.’ I always thought it a very delicate and happy title, a most philosophical choice of phrase. I augured well of the volume; it has never appeared. Some men are great users of a title-page! And to give a good title to a book does, indeed, require genius. I remember when I was a student at Leipzig, there was an anonymous bookseller in that city who was a great hand at title-making. He published every year magnificent lists of works ‘in the press.’ At first the catalogues produced an immense sensation throughout Germany, since there was scarcely a subject that could possibly interest mankind, which was not to be discussed in a forthcoming volume. He did not always regularly begin with an epic poem: he regularly contained some learned history, in ten volumes, quarto—a grand tragedy—a first-rate historical novel—works on criticism, natural philosophy, natural literature, politics, and on every other subject that you can possibly conceive, down to a new treatise for the coming year. Not one of these has ever appeared. Such treatment, after our tastes had been so keenly excited, was really more than the Barmecide's conduct to the barber's son. It was like asking a party of men to dine at some restaurateur's in the Palais Royal,

and then presenting to each of them for dinner—a copy of the carte.”

“You never hunt, I suppose, Mr. Sievers?”

“Never, never. His highness is, I imagine, out this morning; the beautiful weather continues; surely we never had such a season. As for myself, I almost have given up my in-door pursuits. The sun is not the light of study. Let us take our caps, and have a stroll.”

The gentlemen accordingly left the library, and proceeding through a different gate to that by which Vivian had entered the castle, they came upon a part of the forest in which the timber and brushwood had been in a great measure cleared away; large clumps of trees being left standing on an artificial lawn, and newly-made roads winding about in pleasing irregularity until they were all finally lost in the encircling woods.

“I think you told me,” said Mr. Sievers, “that you had been long in Germany. What course do you think of taking from here?”

“Straight to Vienna.”

“Ah! a delightful place. If, as I suppose to be the case, you are fond of dissipation and luxury, Vienna is to be preferred to any city with which I am acquainted. And intellectual companions are not wanting there, as some have said. There are one or two houses in which the literary soirées will yield to none in Europe; and I prefer them to any, because there is less pretension, and more ease. The Archduke John is really a man of considerable talents, and of more considerable acquirements. A most admirable geologist! Are you fond of geology?”

“I am not the least acquainted with the science.”

“Naturally so—at your age if, in fact, we study at all, we are fond of fancying ourselves moral philosophers, and our study is mankind. Trust me, my dear sir, it is a branch of research soon exhausted; and in a few years you will be very glad, for want of something else to do, to meditate upon stones. See now,” said Mr. Sievers, picking up a stone, “to what associations does this little piece of quartz give rise! I am already an antediluvian, and instead of a stag bounding by that wood, I witness the moving mass of a mammoth. I live in other worlds, which, at the same time, I have the advantage of comparing with the present. Geology is indeed a magnificent study! What excites more the imagination? What exercises more the mind? Can you conceive any thing sublimer than the gigantic shadows, and the grim wreck of an antediluvian world! Can you devise any plan which will more brace our powers, and develop our mental energies, than the formation of a perfect chain of inductive reasoning to account for these phenomena! What is the boasted communion which the vain poet holds with nature, compared with the conversation which the geologist perpetually carries on with the elemental world! Gazing on the strata of the earth, he reads the fate of his species. In the undulations of the mountains is revealed to him the history of the past; and in the strength of rivers, and the powers of the air, he discovers the fortunes of the future. To him, indeed, that future, as well as the past and the present, are alike matter for meditation: for the geologist is the most satisfactory of antiquaries, the most interesting of philosophers, and the most inspired of prophets; demonstrating that which has passed by discovery, that which is

occurring by observation, and that which is to come by induction. When you go to Vienna I will give you a letter to Frederic Schlegel; we were fellow-students, and are friends, though for various reasons we do not at present meet; nevertheless, a letter from me will command proper respect. I should advise you, however, before you go on to Vienna, to visit Reisenberg."

"Indeed! from the prince's account I should have thought that there was little to interest me there."

"His highness is not an impartial judge. You are probably acquainted with the disagreeable manner in which he is connected with that court. Far from his opinion being correct, or his advice in this particular to be followed, I should say there are few places in Germany more worthy of a visit than the little court near us; and above all things in the world, my advice is that you should not pass it over."

"I am inclined to follow your advice. You are right in supposing that I am not ignorant that his highness has the misfortune of being the mediatised prince; but what is the exact story about him? I have heard some odd rumours, some vague expressions, some—"

"O! don't you know it all! It's a curious story, but I'm afraid you'll find it rather long. Nevertheless, if you really visit Reisenberg, it may be of use to you to know something of the singular characters you will meet there; and our present conversation, if it do not otherwise interest you, will at least, on this score, give you all requisite information. In the first place, you say you know that Little Lilliput is a mediatised prince; and, of course, are precisely aware what that title means. About fifty years ago, the rival of the illustrious family, in whose chief castle we are both of us now residing, was the Margrave of Reisenberg, another petty prince, with territories not so extensive as those of our friend, and with a population more limited: perhaps fifty thousand souls, half of whom were drunken cousins. The old Margrave of Reisenberg, who then reigned, was a perfect specimen of the old-fashioned, narrow-minded, brutal, bigoted, German prince; he did nothing but hunt, and drink, and think of the ten thousand quarterings of his immaculate shield, all duly acquired from some Vandal ancestor as barbarous as himself. His little margraviate was misgoverned enough for a great empire. Half of his nation, who were his real people, were always starving, and were unable to find crown pieces to maintain the extravagant expenditure of the other moiety, the five-and-twenty thousand cousins; who, out of gratitude to their fellow-subjects for their generous support, or as a punishment for their unreasonable unwillingness to starve, in order that the cousins might drink, harass them with every species of brutal excess. Complaints were of course immediately made to the margrave, and loud cries for justice resounded at the palace-gates. This prince was a most impartial chief magistrate; he prided himself especially upon his 'invariable' principles of justice, and he allowed nothing to influence or corrupt his decisions. His infallible plan for arranging all differences had the merit of being brief; and if brevity be the soul of wit, it certainly was most unreasonable in his subjects to consider his judgments no joke. He always counted the quarterings in the shields of the respective parties, and decided ac-

cordingly. Imagine the speedy redress a muddy-veined peasant against one of the who, of course, had as many quartering margrave himself. The defendant was a gularly acquitted. At length, a man's being burned down out of mere jolt night, the owner had the temerity in the to accuse one of the five-and-twenty thousand and produced, at the same time, a shield thousand and one quarterings, exactly more than the reigning shield itself contained margrave was astounded, the nation in and the five-and-twenty thousand cousins spair. The complainant's shield was examined, and not a flaw discovered. Well! lemma! The chief magistrate consulted numerous branches of his family, and seeing the complainant's head was struck treason, for daring to have one more quartering than his monarch!

"In this way they passed their time all years since in Reisenberg: occasionally, sake of variety, declaring war against the tants of Little Lilliput; who, to say the their habits and pursuits did not materially from their neighbours. The margrave son, the present grand-duke. A due reverence the great family shield, and a full acquiescence with the 'invariable principles' of justice early instilled into him; and the royal made such rapid progress under the tutelage of his amiable parent, that he soon became highly with his five-and-twenty thousand cousins length his popularity became troublesome father; and so the old margrave sent for one morning, and informed him that dreamed the preceding night that the air senberg was peculiarly unwholesome for persons, and therefore he begged him to give his dominions as soon as possible. The prince had no objection to see something of the world, and so with dutiful affection he immediately complied with the royal order, without putting his cousins' loyalty to the test. He flew to the man whom he had never before visited. This man was one of those individuals who at their age, which, by-the-by, Mr. Grey, a nobleman should do; for he who in the nineteenth century, is generally persecuted when living always pilfered when dead. However, this was a philosopher; all about him thou mad; he, in return, thought all about him. He sent the prince to a university, and gave for a tutor, a young man about ten years of his pupil. This person's name was Bec You will hear more of him.

"About three years after the sudden death of the young prince, the old margrave died, and the then reigning Prince of Little shot each other through the head in a brawl, after a dinner given in honour of the celebration of peace between the two countries five-and-twenty thousand cousins were not grieved, as they anticipated a fit successor of their former favourite. Splendid preparations were made for the reception of the incoming thousand quarterings, and all Reisenberg poured out to witness the triumphant entry of their future monarch. At last, two hours plain dress, and on very indifferent steed, up to the palace-gates, dismounted, and

king any inquiry, ordered the attendance of one of the chief nobility in the presence-chamber. One of them, a young man, without any preparatory explanation, introduced the Reisenberg chief to his companion as his prime minister; and commanded them immediately to deliver up their *re-feuilles* and golden keys to Mr. Beckendorff. The nobles were in dismay, and so astounded that they made no resistance; though the next morning they started in their beds, when they remembered that they had delivered their insignia of office to a man without a *nom* before his name. They were soon, however, roused from their sorrow and their sleep, by receiving a peremptory order to quit the palace; and as they retired from the walls which they had long considered as their own, they had a mortification of meeting crowds of the common people, their slaves and their victims, hurrying with joyful countenances and triumphant looks to the palace of their prince; in consequence of an energetic proclamation for the redress of grievances, and an earnest promise to decide cases in future without examining the quarterings of the parties. In a week's time, the five-and-twenty thousand cousins were all adrift. At length they conspired, but the conspiracy was tardy—they found their former servants armed, and they joined in a most unequal struggle; for their opponents were alike animated by the hopes of the future, and with revenge for the past. The cousins got well beat, and this was not the worst; for Beckendorff took advantage of this successful treason, which he had himself fomented, and forfeited all their estates; destroying in one year the foul system which had palsied, for so many years, the energies of his master's subjects. In time, many of the chief nobility were restored their honours and estates; but the power with which they were again invested was greatly modified, and the privileges of the commons greatly increased. At this moment the French revolution broke out—the French crossed the Rhine, and died all before them; and the Prince of Little Lilliput, among other true Germans, made a bold and fruitless resistance. The Margrave of Reisenberg, on the contrary, received the enemy with open arms—he raised a larger body of troops than the due contingent, and exerted himself in every manner to second the views of the great nation. On his return for his services he was presented with the conquered principality of Little Lilliput, and the other adjoining lands; and the margraviate of Reisenberg, with an increased territory and population, and governed with consummate wisdom, began to be considered the most flourishing of the petty states in the quarter of the empire to which it belonged. On the contrary, our princely and patriotic friend, mortified by the degenerate condition of his country and the prosperity of his ancestral house, quitted Little Lilliput, and became one of those emigrant princes who abounded during the first years of the revolution in all the northern parts of Europe. Napoleon soon appeared upon the stage; and vanquished Austria, with the French tating at the gates of her capital, was no longer a condition to support the dignity of the empire. The policy of the Margrave of Reisenberg was as little patriotic, and quite as consistent, as before. Beckendorff became the constant and valued counsellor of the French emperor. It was chiefly by his exertions that the celebrated *Federation of the Rhine* was carried into effect.

The institution of this body excited among many Germans, at the time, loud expressions of indignation; but I believe few impartial and judicious men now look upon that league as any other than one, in the formation of which the most consummate statesmanship was exhibited. In fact, it prevented the subjugation of Germany to France, and by flattering the pride of Napoleon, it saved the decomposition of our empire. But how this might be, it is not at present necessary for us to inquire. Certain, however, it was, that the pupil of Beckendorff was amply repaid for the advice and exertions of his master, and his minister; and when Napoleon fell, the brows of the former margrave were encircled with a grand-ducal crown; and his dutchy, while it contained upwards of a million and a half of inhabitants, numbered in its limits some of the most celebrated cities in Germany, and many of Germany's most flourishing provinces. But Napoleon fell. The Prince of Little Lilliput and his companions in patriotism and misfortune returned from their exile, panting with hope and vengeance. A congress was held to settle the affairs of agitated Germany. Where was the Grand-duke of Reisenberg? His hard-earned crown tottered on his head. Where was his crafty minister, the supporter of revolutionary France, the friend of its imperial enslaver, the constant enemy of the house of Austria? At the very congress which, according to the expectations of the exiled princes, was to restore them to their own dominions, and to reward their patriotic loyalty with the territories of their revolutionary brethren; yes! at this very congress was Beckendorff; not as a suppliant, not as a victim; but sitting at the right hand of Metternich, and watching, with paternal affection, the first interesting and infantine movements of that most prosperous of political bantlings—the Holy Alliance. You may well imagine that the military grand-duke had a much better chance in political negotiation than the emigrant prince. In addition to this, the Grand-duke of Reisenberg had married, during the war, a princess of a powerful house; and the allied sovereigns were eager to gain the future aid and constant co-operation of a mind like Beckendorff's. The Prince of Little Lilliput, the patriot, was rewarded for his conduct by being restored to his forfeited possessions; and the next day he became the subject of his former enemy, the Grand-duke of Reisenberg, the traitor. What think you of Monsieur Beckendorff? He must be a curious gentleman, I imagine!"

"One of the most interesting characters I have long heard of. But his pupil appears to be a man of mind."

"You shall hear, you shall hear. I should however first mention, that while Beckendorff has not scrupled to resort to any measures, or adopt any opinions in order to further the interests of his monarch and his country, he has in every manner shown that personal aggrandizement has never been his object. He lives in the most perfect retirement, scarcely with an attendant, and his moderate official stipend amply supports his more moderate expenditure. The subjects of the grand-duke may well be grateful that they have a minister without relations, and without favourites. The grand-duke is, unquestionably, a man of talents; but at the same time, perhaps, one of the most weak-minded men that ever breathed. He was fortunate in

meeting with Beckendorff early in life; and as the influence of the minister has not for a moment ceased over the mind of the monarch, to the world, the Grand-duke of Reisenberg has always appeared to be an individual of a strong mind and consistent conduct. But when you have lived as much and as intimately in his court as I have done, you will find how easily the world may be deceived. Since the close connexion which now exists between Reisenberg and Austria took place, Beckendorff has, in a great degree, revived the ancient privileges of blood and birth. A minister who has sprung from the people will always conciliate the aristocracy. Having no family influence of his own, he endeavours to gain the influence of others; and it often happens that merit is never less considered than when merit has made the minister. A curious instance of this occurs in a neighbouring state. There the premier, decidedly a man of great talents, is of as low an origin as Beckendorff. With no family to uphold him, he supports himself by a lavish division of all the places and patronage of the state among the nobles. If the younger son or brother of a peer dare to sully his oratorical virginity by a chance observation in the Lower Chamber, the minister, himself a real orator, immediately rises to congratulate, in pompous phrase, the House and the country on the splendid display which has made this night memorable; and on the decided advantages which must accrue both to their own resolutions and the national interests, from the future participation of his noble friend in their deliberations. All about him are young nobles, utterly unfit for the discharge of their respective duties. His private secretary is unable to coin a sentence, almost to direct a letter, but he is noble!—The secondary officials cannot be trusted even in the least critical conjunctures, but they are noble!—And the prime minister of a powerful empire is forced to rise early and be up late; not to meditate on the present fortunes or future destinies of his country, but by his personal exertions, to compensate for the inefficiency and expiate the blunders of his underlings, whom his unfortunate want of blood has forced him to overwhelm with praises which they do not deserve, and duties which they cannot discharge. I do not wish you to infer that the policy of Beckendorff has been actuated by the feelings which influence the minister whom I have noticed, from whose conduct in this very respect his own materially differs. On the contrary, his connexion with Austria is in all probability the primary great cause. However this may be, certain it is, that all offices about the court and connected with the army, (and I need not remind you, that at a small German court these situations are often the most important in the state,) can only be filled by the nobility; nor can any person who has the misfortune of not inheriting the magical monosyllable *von* before his name, which, as you know, like the French *de*, is the shibboleth of nobility, and the symbol of territorial pride, violate by their unhallowed presence the sanctity of court dinners, or the as sacred ceremonies of a noble fête. But while a monopoly of those offices, which for their due performance require only a showy exterior or a schooled address, is granted to the nobles, all those state charges which require the exercise of intellect, are now chiefly filled by the bourgeoisie. At the same

time, however, that both our secretaries of state, many of our privy councillors, war councillors, forest councillors, and finance councillors, are to be reckoned among the second class, still not one of these exalted individuals, who from their situations are necessarily in constant personal communication with the sovereign, ever see that sovereign except in his cabinet and his council-chamber. Beckendorff himself, the premier, is the son of a peasant; and of course not noble. Nobility, which has been proffered him, not only by his own monarch, but by most of the sovereigns of Europe, he has invariably refused; and consequently never appears at court. The truth is, that from disposition, he is little inclined to mix with men; and he has taken advantage of his want of an epeecheon, completely to exempt himself from all those duties of etiquette which his exalted situation would otherwise have imposed upon him. None can complain of the haughtiness of the nobles, when, ostensibly, the minister himself is not exempted from their exclusive regulations. If you go to Reisenberg, you will not therefore see Beckendorff, who lives, as I have mentioned, in perfect solitude, about thirty miles from the capital; communicating only with his royal master, the foreign ministers, and one or two official characters of his own country. I was myself an inmate of the court for upwards of two years. During that time I never saw the minister; and, with the exception of some members of the royal family, and the characters I have mentioned, I never knew one person who had even caught a glimpse of the individual, who may indeed be said to be regulating their destinies.

"It is at the court, then," continued Mr. Simon, "when he is no longer under the control of Beckendorff, and in those minor points which are not subjected to the management or influenced by the mind of the minister, that the true character of the grand-duke is to be detected. Indeed, it may really be said, that the weakness of his mind has been the origin of his fortune. In his early youth, his pliant temper adapted itself without a struggle to the barbarous customs and the brutal conduct of his father's court: that same pliancy of temper prevented him opposing with bigoted obstinacy the exertions of his relation to educate and civilise him; that same pliancy of temper allowed him to become the ready and the enthusiastic disciple of Beckendorff. Had the pupil, when he ascended the throne, left his master behind him, it is very probable that his natural feelings would have led him to oppose the French; and at this moment, instead of being the first of the second-rate powers of Germany, the Grand-duke of Reisenberg might himself have been a mediatised prince. As it was, the same pliancy of temper which I have noticed, enabled him to receive Napoleon when an emperor, with outstretched arms; and at this moment does not prevent him from receiving, with equal rapture, the imperial archduchess, who will soon be on her road from Vienna to espouse his son-for, to crown his wonderful career, Beckendorff has successfully negotiated a marriage between a daughter of the house of Austria and the Crown Prince."

* Hereditary prince is, I believe, in all cases, the eldest son of a German grand-duke. I had not used a title which would not be understood by the English reader. Crown prince is also a German title, in strictness, only assumed by the son of a king.

Reisenberg. It is generally believed that the step of the diet will be to transmute the er's grand-ducal coronet into a regal crown; perhaps, my good sir, before you reach us, you may have the supreme honour of presented to his majesty, the King of Reisen-

Beckendorff's career you may well style wonderful. But when you talk only of his pupil's pliancy of temper, am I to suppose, that in mentioning his talents you were speaking ironically?"

By no means! The grand-duke is a brilliant star; a man of refined taste; a real patron of the arts; a lover of literature; a promoter of science; what the world would call a philosopher. His present is sound and generally correct—his sense of discrimination singularly acute—and his knowledge of mankind greater than that of most reigns: but, with all these advantages, he is beset with such a wavering and indecisive temper,

when, which is usually the case, he has come to a right conclusion, he can never prevail upon himself to carry his theory into practice; and with all his acuteness, his discernment, and his knowledge of the world, his mind is always ready to receive any impression from the person who last addressed him; though he himself be fully aware of the inferiority of his adviser's intellect to his own, or the imperfection of that adviser's knowledge.

Never for a moment out of the sight of Beckendorff, the royal pupil has made a most adroit political puppet; since his own talents have enabled him to understand the part which the minister had forced him to perform. Thus the grand-duke has given the grand-duke credit, not only for possession of great talents, but almost for as much firmness of mind and decision of character as the minister.

But since his long-agitated career has become calm and tranquil, and Beckendorff, like a mercurial spirit, has ceased to be ever at his elbow, the character of the Grand-duke of Reisenberg becomes to be understood. His court has been, and is, frequented by all the men of genius in the country, who are admitted without scruple, even if they be not noble. But the astonishing thing is, that the grand-duke is always surrounded by every species of political and philosophical quack that can imagine. Discussion on a free press, on the reformation of the criminal code, on the abolition of commercial duties, and such-like interminable topics, are perpetually resounding within the ears of this arbitrary prince; and the people, fired by the representations of the literary and political quacks with which Reisenberg abounds, and by the bold speculations on all subjects elude the vigilance of the censor, by being skillfully amalgamated with a lavish praise of the royal character, perpetually flattered with the speedy hope of gaining freedom. Suddenly, when all are expecting the grant of a charter, or the institution of a new constitution, Mr. Beckendorff rides up from his retirement to the Residence, and the next day the whole land of philosophers are swept from the royal presence, and the censorship of the press becomes severe, that for a moment you would fancy that Reisenberg, instead of being, as it boasts itself, the most liberal Athens, had more right to the title of the most despotic Boeotia. The people, who enjoy an unequal administration of equal laws, who have been oppressed and are flourishing, under the wise and paternal rule of their new monarch, have in fact

no inclination to exert themselves for the attainment of constitutional liberty, in any other way than by their voices. Their barbarous apathy astounds the *philosophes*; who, in despair, when the people tell them that they are happy and contented, artfully remind them that their happiness depends on the will of a single man; and that, though the present character of the monarch may guaranty present felicity, still they should think of their children, and not less exert themselves for the ensurance of future. These representations, as constantly reiterated as the present system will allow, have at length, I assure you, produced an effect; and political causes of a peculiar nature, of which I shall soon speak, combining their influence with these philosophical exertions, have of late, frequently frightened the grand-duke; who, in despair, would perhaps grant a Constitution, if Beckendorff would allow him. But the minister is conscious that the people would not be happier, and do not in fact require one: he looks with a jealous and an evil eye on the charlatanism of all kinds which is now so prevalent at court: he knows from the characters of many of these philosophers and patriots, that their private interest is generally the secret spring of their public virtue; that if the grand-duke, moved by their entreaties, or seduced by their flattery, were to yield a little, he would soon be obliged to grant all, to their demands and their threats; and finally, Beckendorff has of late years, so completely interwoven the policy of Reisenberg with that of Austria, that he feels that the rock on which he has determined to found the greatness of his country must be quitted forever, if he yield one jot to the caprice or the weakness of his monarch."

"But Beckendorff," said Vivian; "why can he not crush in the bud the noxious plant which he so much dreads? Why does the press speak in the least to the people? Why is the grand-duke surrounded by any others except pompous grand-marshals, and empty-headed lord-chamberlains? I am surprised at this indifference, this want of energy!"

"My dear sir, there are reasons for all things. Rest assured that Beckendorff is not a man to act incautiously or weakly. The grand-duchess, the mother of the crown prince, has been long dead. Beckendorff, who, as a man, has the greatest contempt for women—as a statesman, looks to them as the most precious of political instruments—it was his wish to have married the grand-duke to the young princess who is now destined for his son; but for once in his life he failed in influencing his pupil. The truth was, and it is to this cause that we must trace the present disorganized state of the court, and indeed of the kingdom, that the grand-duke had secretly married a lady to whom he had long been attached. This lady was a countess, and his subject; and as it was impossible, by the laws of the kingdom, that any one but a member of a reigning family could be allowed to share the throne, his royal highness had recourse to a plan which is not uncommon in this country, and espoused the lady with his left hand. The ceremony, which we call here a *morganatic* marriage, you have probably heard of before. The favoured female is, to all intents and purposes, the wife of the monarch, and shares every thing except his throne. She presides at court, but neither she nor her children assume the style of majesty; although in some in-

stances the latter have been created princes, and acknowledged as heirs apparent, when there has been a default in the linal royal issue. The lady of whom we are speaking, according to the usual custom, has assumed a name derivative from that of her royal husband; and as the grand-duke's name is Charles, she is styled Madame Carolina."

"And what kind of lady is Madame Carolina?" asked Vivian.

"Philosophical! piquant! Parisian!—a genius, according to her friends; who, as in fact she is a queen, are of course the whole world. Though a German by family, she is a Frenchwoman by birth. Educated in the *salons spirituels* of the French metropolis, she has early imbibed superb ideas of the perfectibility of man and of the 'science' of conversation; on both which subjects you will not be long at court, ere you hear her descant; demonstrating by the brilliancy of her ideas the possibility of the one, and by the fluency of her language her acquaintance with the other. She is much younger than her husband; and though not exactly a model for Phidias, a most fascinating woman. Variety is the talisman by which she commands all hearts, and gained her monarch's. She is only consistent in being delightful; but, though changeable, she is not capricious. Each day displays a new accomplishment as regularly as it does a new costume; but as the acquirement seems only valued by its possessor as it may delight others, so the dress seems worn, not so much to gratify her own vanity, as to please her friends' tastes. Genius is her idol; and with her, genius is found in every thing. She speaks in equal raptures of an opera dancer, and an epic poet. Her ambition is to converse on all subjects; and by a judicious management of a great mass of miscellaneous reading, and by indefatigable exertions to render herself mistress of the prominent points of the topics of the day, she appears to converse on all subjects with ability. She takes the liveliest interest in the progress of mind, in all quarters of the globe; and imagines that she should, at the same time, immortalize herself and benefit her species, could she only establish a quarterly review in Ashantee, and a scientific gazette at Timbuctoo. Notwithstanding her sudden elevation, no one has ever accused her of arrogance, or pride, or ostentation. Her liberal principles, and her enlightened views, are acknowledged by all. She advocates equality in her circle of privileged nobles; and is enthusiastic on the rights of man, in a country where justice is a favour. Her boast is to be surrounded by men of genius, and her delight to correspond with the most celebrated persons of all countries. She is herself a literary character of no mean celebrity. Few months have elapsed since enraptured Reisenberg hailed, from her glowing pen, two neat octavos, bearing the title of '*MEMOIRS OF THE COURT OF CHARLEMAGNE*,' which give an interesting and accurate picture of the age, and delight the modern public with vivid descriptions of the cookery, costume, and conversation of the eighth century. You smile, my friend, at Madame Carolina's production. Do not you agree with me, that it requires no mean talent to convey a picture of the bustle of a levee during the middle ages! Conceive Sir Oliver looking in at his club! and fancy the small talk of Roland during a morning visit! Yet even the fame of this work is to be eclipsed by madame's

forthcoming quarto of '*HAROUN AL RASCHID AND HIS TIMES*.' This, it is whispered, is to be a *chef d'œuvre*, enriched by a chronological arrangement, by a celebrated oriental scholar, of all the anecdotes in the Arabian Nights relating to the caliph. It is, of course, the sun of madame's patronage that has hatched into noxious life the swarm of sciolists who now infest the court, and who are sapping the husband's political power, while they are establishing the wife's literary reputation. So much for Madame Carolina! I need hardly add, that during your short stay at court, you will be delighted with her. If ever you know her as well as I do, you will find her vain, superficial, heartless: her sentiment—a system; her enthusiasm—exaggeration; and her genius—merely a clever adoption of the profundity of others."

"And Beckendorff and the lady are not friendly?" asked Vivian, who was delighted with his communicative companion.

"Beckendorff's is a mind that such a woman cannot, of course, comprehend. He treats her with contempt, and, if possible, views her with hatred; for he considers that she has degraded the character of his pupil; while she, on the contrary, wonders by what magic spell he exercises such influence over the conduct of her husband. At first, Beckendorff treated her and her circle of illuminati with contemptuous silence; but, in politics, nothing is contemptible. The minister, knowing that the people were prosperous and happy, cared little for projected constitutions, and less for metaphysical abstractions; but some circumstances have lately occurred, which, I imagine, have convinced him that for once he had miscalculated. After the arrangement of the German states, when the princes were first mediatised, an attempt was made, by means of a threatening league, to obtain for these political victims a very ample share of the power and patronage of the new state of Reisenberg. This plan failed, from the lukewarmness and indecision of our good friend of Little Lilliput; who, between ourselves, was prevented from joining the alliance by the intrigues of Beckendorff. Beckendorff secretly took measures that the prince should be promised, that in case of his keeping backward, he should obtain more than would fall to his lot by leading the van. The Prince of Little Lilliput and his peculiar friends accordingly were quiet, and the attempt of the other chieftains failed. It was then that his highness found he had been duped. Beckendorff would not acknowledge the authority, and, of course, did not redeem the pledge of his agent. The effect that this affair produced upon the prince's mind you can conceive. Since then he has never frequented Reisenberg, but constantly resided either at his former capital, now a provincial town of the grand-duchy, or at this castle; viewed, you may suppose, with no very cordial feeling by his companions in misfortune. But the thirst of revenge will inscribe the bitterest enemies in the same muster-roll, and the princes, incited by the bold carriage of Madame Carolina's philosophical protégés, and induced to believe that Beckendorff's power is on the wane, have again made overtures to our friend, without whose powerful assistance they feel that they have but little chance of success. Observe how much more men's conduct is influenced by circumstances than principles! When these persons league together before, it was with the avowed intention

taining a share of the power and patronage of state: the great body of the people, of course, did not sympathize in that, which, after all, was a party quarrel; and by the joint efforts of open force and secret intrigue, the prince triumphed. But now, these same individuals go forward, not as indignant princes demanding redress of the envied tyranny, but as ardent advocates of a people's rights. The public, I believe that in fact they will make no exertion to acquire a constitutional freedom, because of which they can only abstractedly have no objection to attain that, which they are assured will not injure their situation, provided by the risk and exertions of others. As far, therefore, as clamour can support the princes, they stand on their side; and as upwards of a hundred thousand of the grand-ducal subjects are still living on their estates, and still consider themselves as their serfs, they trust that some use from this great body may incite the rest of the people to similar outrages. The natural imitation of mankind to imitation, particularly in the act to be imitated is popular, deserves attention. The court is divided; for the exertions of the dame, and the bewitching influence of fashion, have turned the heads even of gray-beards: and to you only one instance, his excellency the marshal, a protégé of the house of Austria, a favourite of Metternich, the very persons to whose interests, and as a reward for whose services, our princely friend was sacrificed by the emperor, has now himself become a pupil in the school of modern philosophy, and drivels out, with ignorance and fervour, enlightened notions of the most obscure subjects. In the midst of all confusion, the grand-duke is timorous, dubious, and uncertain. Beckendorff has a difficult part to play; he may fall at last. Such, my dear sir, are the tremendous consequences of a weak prince marrying a blue-stocking!"

And the crown prince, Mr. Sievers, how does he conduct himself at this interesting moment? His mind so completely engrossed by the antipathies of his imperial alliance, that he has no thought for any thing but his approaching bride?"

The crown prince, my dear sir, is neither thinking of his bride, nor of any thing else: he is a back-bitted idiot. Of his deformities I have often been a witness; and though it is difficult to form an opinion of the intellect of a being with whom you have never interchanged a syllable, nevertheless his countenance does not contradict the common creed. I say the common creed, Mr. Sievers, for there are moments when the Crown Prince of Reichenberg is spoken of by his future subjects in a very different manner. Whenever an unpopular act is committed, or any unpopular suggestion is suggested by the court or the grand-duke, whispers are immediately afloat that a future king must be looked for in their prince; then it is generally understood that his idiotism is only assumed; and what woman does not detect, in the glimmerings of his lack-lustre eye, the vivid sparks of an oppressed genius? In a short time the clouds roll over the court; dissatisfaction disappears; the moment that the monarch is again popular, the unfortunate crown prince again becomes the usual object of pity or derision. All immediately forget that his idiotism is only assumed; what woman ever ceases from deploring the

unhappy lot of the future wife of their impuissant prince?—Such, my dear sir, is the way of mankind! at the first glance it would appear, that in this world, monarchs, on the whole, have it pretty well their own way; but reflection will soon enable us not to envy their situations; and speaking as a father, which unfortunately I am not, should I not view with disgust that lot in life, which necessarily makes my son—my enemy? The crown prince of all countries is only a puppet in the hands of the people, to be played against his own father."

CHAPTER XX

THE prince returned home at a late hour, and immediately inquired for Vivian. During dinner, which he hastily despatched, it did not escape our hero's attention, that his highness was unusually silent, and, indeed, agitated.

"When we have finished our meal, my good friend," at length said the prince, "I very much wish to consult with you on a most important business." Since the explanation of last night, the prince, in private conversation, had dropped his regal plural.

"I am ready this moment," said Vivian.

"You will think it very strange, Mr. Grey, when you become acquainted with the nature of my communication; you will justly consider it most strange—most singular—that I should choose for a confidant and a counsellor in an important business, a gentleman with whom I have been acquainted so short a time as yourself. But, sir, I have well weighed, at least I have endeavoured well to weigh, all the circumstances and contingencies which such a confidence would involve; and the result of my reflection is, that I will look to you as a friend and an adviser, feeling assured that both from your situation and your disposition, no temptation exists which can induce you to betray or to deceive me." Though the prince said this with an appearance of perfect sincerity, he stopped and looked very earnestly in his guest's face, as if he would read his secret thoughts, or were desirous of now giving him an opportunity of answering.

"As far as the certainty of your confidence being respected," answered Vivian, "I trust your highness may communicate to me with the most assured spirit. But while my ignorance of men and affairs in this country will insure you from any treachery on my part, I very much fear that it will also preclude me from affording you any advantageous advice or assistance."

"On that head," replied the prince, "I am of course the best judge. The friend whom I need is a man not ignorant of the world, with a cool head and an impartial mind. Though young, you have said and told me enough to prove that you are not unacquainted with mankind. Of your courage, I have already had a convincing proof. In the business in which I require your assistance, freedom from national prejudices will materially increase the value of your advice; and therefore I am far from being unwilling to consult a person ignorant, according to your own phrase, of men and affairs in this country. Moreover, your education as an Englishman has early led you to exercise your mind on political subjects; and it is in a political business that I require your aid."

"Am I fated always to be the dry-nurse of an embryo faction!" thought Vivian, in despair, and he watched earnestly the countenance of the prince. In a moment he expected to be invited to become a counsellor of the leagued princes. Either the lamp was burning dim, or the blazing wood fire had suddenly died away, or a mist was over Vivian's eyes; but for a moment he almost imagined that he was sitting opposite his old friend, the Marquess of Carabas. The prince's phrase had given rise to a thousand agonizing associations: in an instant Vivian had worked up his mind to a pitch of nervous excitement.

"Political business!" said Vivian, in an agitated voice. "You could not have addressed a more unfortunate person. I have seen, prince, too much of politics, ever to wish to meddle with them again."

"You are too quick—too quick, my good friend," continued his highness. "I may wish to consult you on political business, and yet have no intention of engaging you in politics—which, indeed, is quite a ridiculous idea. But I see that I was right in supposing that these subjects have engaged your attention."

"I have seen, in a short time, a great deal of the political world," answered Vivian, who was almost ashamed of his previous emotion; "and I thank Heaven daily, that I have no chance of again having any connexion with it."

"Well, well!—that as it may be. Nevertheless, your experience is only another inducement to me to request your assistance. Do not fear that I wish to embroil you in politics; but I hope you will not refuse, although almost a stranger, to add to the very great obligations which I am already under to you, and give me the benefit of your opinion."

"Your highness may speak with the most perfect unreserve, and reckon upon my delivering my most genuine sentiments."

"You have not forgotten, I venture to believe," said the prince, "our short conversation of last night?"

"It was of too interesting a nature easily to escape my memory."

"Before I can consult you on the subject which at present interests me, it is necessary that I should make you a little acquainted with the present state of public affairs here, and the characters of the principal individuals who control."

"As far as an account of the present state of political parties, the history of the grand-duke's career, and that of his minister, Mr. Beckendorff, and their reputed characters, will form part of your highness's narrative, by so much may its length be curtailed, and your trouble lessened; for I have at different times picked up, in casual conversation, a great deal of information on these topics. Indeed, you may address me, in this respect, as you would any German gentleman, who, not being himself personally interested in public life, is of course not acquainted with its most secret details."

"I did not reckon on this," said the prince, in a cheerful voice. "This is a great advantage, and another reason that I should no longer hesitate to develop to you a certain affair which now occupies my mind. To be short," continued the prince, "it is of the letter which I so mysteriously received last night, and which, as you must have remarked,

very much agitated me,—it is on this letter that I wish to consult you. Bearing in mind the exact position—the avowed and public position in which I stand, as connected with the court; and having a due acquaintance, which you state you have, with the character of Mr. Beckendorff, what think you of this letter?"

So saying the prince leaned over the table, and handed to Vivian the following epistle.

"TO HIS HIGHNESS THE PRINCE OF LITTLE LILLIPUT.

"I am commanded by his royal highness to inform your highness, that his royal highness has considered the request which was signed by your highness and other noblemen, and presented by you to his royal highness in a private interview. His royal highness commands me to state, that that request will receive his most attentive consideration. At the same time, his royal highness also commands me to observe, that, in bringing about the completion of a result desired by all parties, it is difficult to carry on the necessary communications merely by written documents; and his royal highness has therefore commanded me to submit to your highness, the advisability of taking some steps in order to further the possibility of the occurrence of an oral interchange of the sentiments of the respective parties. Being aware, that from the position which your highness has thought proper at present to maintain, and from other causes which are of too delicate a nature to be noticed in any other way except by allusion, that your highness may feel difficulty in personally communicating with his royal highness, without consulting the wishes and opinions of the other princes; a process to which it must be evident to your highness, his royal highness feels it impossible to submit; and at the same time, desirous of forwarding the progress of those views, which his royal highness and your highness may conjunctively consider calculated to advance the well-being of the state, I have to submit to your highness the propriety of considering the propositions contained in the enclosed paper; which, if your highness keep unconnected with this communication, the purport of this letter will be confined to your highness.

"PROPOSITIONS.

"1st. That an interview shall take place between your highness and myself; the object of which shall be the consideration of measures by which, when adopted, the various interests now in agitation shall respectively be regarded.

"2d. That this interview shall be secret; your highness being incognito.

"If your highness be disposed to accede to the first proposition, I beg to submit to you, that from the nature of my residence, its situation and other causes, there will be no fear that any suspicion of the fact of Mr. von Philipson acceding to the two propositions will gain notoriety. This letter will be delivered into your own hands. If Mr. von Philipson determine on acceding to these propositions, he is most probably aware of the general locality in which my residence is situated; and proper measures will be taken that, if Mr. von Philipson honour me with a visit, he shall not be under the necessity of attracting attention, by inquiring the way to my house. It is wished that

a fact of the second proposition being acceded to, could only be known to Mr. von Philipson and myself; but if to be perfectly unattended be considered as an insuperable objection, I consent to his going accompanied by a single friend. I shall be one.

"BECKENDORFF."

"Well!" said the prince, as Vivian finished the letter.

"The best person," said Vivian, "to decide upon your highness consenting to this interview is myself."

"That is not the point on which I wish to have the benefit of your opinion; for I have already consulted. I rode over this morning to my cousin, the Duke of Micromegas, and despatched from his residence a trusty messenger to Beckendorff. I have agreed to meet him—and to-morrow; but on the express terms that I shall not be unattended. Now, then," continued the prince, with great energy, "now, then, will you be my companion?"

"I!" said Vivian, in the greatest surprise.

"Yes; *you*, my good friend!—*you*, *you*. I should consider myself as safe if I were sleeping in a burning house, as I should be were I with Beckendorff alone. Although this is not the first time that we have communicated, I have never yet seen him; and I am fully aware, that if the approaching interview were known to my friends, they would consider it high time that my son reigned in my stead. But I am resolved to be firm—to be inflexible. My course is plain. I am not to be again duped by him; which," continued the prince, very much confused, "I will not conceal that I have been so."

"But I!" said Vivian; "I—what good can I possibly do? It appears to me, that if Beckendorff is to be dreaded as you describe, the presence of the attendance of no friend can possibly save you from his crafty plans. But surely, if any one attend you, why not be accompanied by a person whom you have known long, and who knows you well—on whom you can confidently rely, and who may be aware, from a thousand signs and circumstances which will never attract my attention, at what particular and pressing moments you may require prompt and energetic assistance. Such is the companion you want; and surely such a one you may find in Arnelm—Von Neuwid—"

"Arnelm! Von Neuwid!" said the prince; "the best hands at sounding a bugle, or spearing a boar, in all Reisenberg! Excellent men, forsooth, to guard their master from the diplomatic deceptions of the wily Beckendorff! Moreover, were they to have even the slightest suspicion of my intended movement, they would commit rank treason out of pure loyalty, and lock me up in my own cabinet! No, no! they will never do: I want a companion of experience and knowledge of the world; with whom I may converse with some prospect of finding my wavering firmness strengthened, or my mislaid judgment rightly guided, or my puzzled brain cleared,—modes of assistance to which the worthy jagd junker is but little accustomed, however quickly he might hasten to my side in a combat, or the chase."

"If these, then, will not do, surely there is one man in this castle, who, although he may not be a match for Beckendorff, can be foiled by few others—Mr. Sievers!" said Vivian, with an inquiring eye.

"Sievers!" exclaimed the prince with great eagerness; "the very man! firm, experienced, and sharp-witted—well schooled in political learning, in case I required his assistance in arranging the terms of the intended charter, or the plan of the intended chambers; for these, of course, are the points on which Beckendorff wishes to consult. But one thing I am determined on: I positively pledge myself to nothing, while under Beckendorff's roof. He doubtless anticipates, by my visit, to grant the liberties of the people on his own terms: perhaps Mr. Beckendorff, for once in his life, may be mistaken. I am not to be deceived twice; and I am determined not to yield the point of the treasury being under the control of the senate. That is the part of the harness which galls; and to preserve themselves from this rather inconvenient regulation, without question, my good friend Beckendorff has hit upon this plan."

"Then Mr. Sievers will accompany you?" asked Vivian, calling the prince's attention to the point of consultation.

"The very man for it, my dear friend! but although Beckendorff, most probably respecting my presence, and taking into consideration the circumstances under which we meet, would refrain from consigning Sievers to a dungeon; still, although the minister invites this interview, and although I have no single inducement to conciliate him; yet it would scarcely be correct, scarcely dignified on my part, to prove by the presence of my companion, that I had for a length of time harboured an individual who, by Beckendorff's own exertions, was banished from the grand-duchy. It would look too much like a bravado."

"O!" said Vivian, "is it so; and pray of what was Mr. Sievers guilty?"

"Of high treason against one who was not his sovereign."

"How is that?"

"Sievers, who is a man of most considerable talents, was for a long time a professor in one of our great universities. The publication of many able works procured him a reputation which induced Madame Carolina to use every exertion to gain his attendance at court; and a courtier in time the professor became. At Reisenberg Mr. Sievers was the great authority on all possible subjects—philosophical, literary, and political. In fact, he was the fashion; and, at the head of the great literary journal which is there published, he terrified admiring Germany with his profound and piquant critiques. Unfortunately, like some men as good, he was unaware that Reisenberg was not an independent state; and so, on the occasion of Austria attacking Naples, Mr. Sievers took the opportunity of attacking Austria. His article, eloquent, luminous, profound, revealed the dark colours of the Austrian policy; as an artist's lamp brings out the murky tints of a Spagnoletto. Every one admires Sievers' bitter sarcasms, enlightened views, and indignant eloquence. Madame Carolina crowned him with laurel in the midst of her coquetry; and it is said that the grand-duke sent him a snuff-box. In a very short time the article reached Vienna; and in a still shorter time Mr. Beckendorff reached the Residence, and insisted on the author being immediately given up to the Austrian government. Madame Carolina was in despair, the grand-duke in doubt, and Beckendorff threatened to resign if the order were not signed. A

kind friend, perhaps his royal highness himself, gave Sievers timely notice, and by rapid flight he reached my castle, and demanded my hospitality; he has lived here ever since, and has done me a thousand services, not the least of which, is the education which he has given my son, my glorious Maximilian."

"And Beckendorff," asked Vivian, "has he always been aware that Sievers was concealed here?"

"That I cannot answer: had he been, it is not improbable that he would have winked at it; since it never has been his policy unnecessarily to annoy a mediatised prince, or without great occasion to let us feel that our independence is gone, I will not, with such a son as I have, say—forever."

"Mr. Sievers, of course, then, cannot visit Beckendorff," said Vivian.

"That is clear," said the prince, "and I therefore trust that now you will no longer refuse my first request."

It was, of course, impossible for Vivian to deny the prince any longer: and indeed he had no objection, as his highness could not be better attended, to seize the singular and unexpected opportunity, which now offered itself, of becoming acquainted with an individual, respecting whom his curiosity was very much excited. It was a late hour ere the prince and his friend retired; having arranged every thing for the morrow's journey, and conversed on the probable subjects of the approaching interview at great length.

CHAPTER XXI.

On the following morning, before sunrise, the prince's valet roused Vivian from his slumbers. According to the appointment of the preceding evening, Vivian repaired in due time to a certain spot in the park. The prince reached it at the same moment. A mounted groom, leading two English horses, of very showy appearance, and each having a travelling case strapped on the back of its saddle, awaited them. His highness mounted one of the steeds with skilful celerity, although Arnelm and Von Neuweid were not there to do honour to his bridle and his stirrup.

"You must give me an impartial opinion of your courser, my dear friend," said the prince to Vivian, "for if you deem it worthy of being bestridden by you, my son requests that you will do him the great honour of accepting it; if so, call it Max; and provided it be as thorough-bred as the donor, you need not change it for Bucephalus."

"Not worthy of the son of Ammon!" said Vivian, as he touched the spirited animal with his spur, and proved its fiery action on the springing turf.

A man never feels so proud or so sanguine as when he is bounding on the back of a fine horse. Cares fly with the first curvet; and the very sight of a spur is enough to prevent one committing suicide. What a magnificent creature is man, that a brute's prancing hoof can influence his temper or his destiny!—and truly, however little there may be to admire in the rider, few things in this *admirable world* can be conceived more beautiful than a horse, when the bloody spur has thrust some anger in his resentful side. How splendid to view

him with his dilated nostril, his flaming eye, his arched neck, and his waving tail, rustling like a banner in a battle!—to see him champing his slavered bridle, and sprinkling the snowy foam upon the earth, which his hasty hoof seems almost as if it scorned to touch!

When Vivian and his companion had proceeded about five miles, the prince pulled up, and giving a sealed letter to the groom, he desired him to leave them. The prince and Vivian amused themselves for a considerable time by endeavouring to form a correct conception of the person, manners, and habits of the wonderful man to whom they were on the point of paying so interesting a visit.

"I bitterly regret," said Vivian, "that I have forgotten my Montesquieu; and what would I give now to know by rote only one quotation from Machiavel! I expect to be received with folded arms, and a brow lowering with the overwhelming weight of a brain meditating for the control of millions. His letter has prepared us for the mysterious, but not very amusing style of his conversation. He will be perpetually on his guard not to commit himself; and although public business, and the receipt of papers, by calling him away, will occasionally give us an opportunity of being alone; still I regret most bitterly, that I did not put in my case some interesting volume, which would have allowed me to feel less tedious those hours during which you will necessarily be employed with him in private consultation."

After a ride of five hours, the horsemen arrived at a small village.

"Thus far I think I have well piloted you," said the prince: "but I confess my knowledge here ceases; and though I shall disobey the diplomatic instructions of the great man, I must even ask some old woman the way to Mr. Beckendorff's."

While they were hesitating as to whom they should address, an equestrian, who already passed them on the road, though at some distance, came up, and inquired, in a voice which Vivian immediately recognised as that of the messenger who had brought Beckendorff's letter to Turripurva, whether he had the honour of addressing Mr. von Philipson. Neither of the gentlemen answered, for Vivian of course expected the prince to reply; and his highness was, as yet, so unused to his incognito, that he had actually forgotten his own name. But it was evident that the demandant had questioned rather from system than by way of security; and he waited very patiently until the prince had collected his senses, and assumed sufficient gravity of countenance to inform the horseman that he was the person in question. "What, sir, is your pleasure?"

"I am instructed to ride on before you, sir, that you may not mistake your way:" and without waiting for an answer, the laconic messenger turned his steed's head, and trotted off.

The travellers soon left the high road, and turned up a wild turf path, not only inaccessible to carriages, but even requiring great attention from horsemen. After much winding, and some floundering, they arrived at a light and very fanciful iron gate, which apparently opened into a shrubbery.

"I will take your horses here, gentlemen," said the guide; and getting off his horse, he opened the gate. "Follow this path, and you can pass with no difficulty." The prince and Vivian accordingly dismounted; and the guide in-

7, with the end of his whip, gave a loud shrill

6. path ran, for a very short way, through the very, which evidently was a belt encircling rounds. From this the prince and Vivian ed upon an ample lawn, which formed on the west side a terrace, by gradually sloping to the margin of a river. It was enclosed on three sides by an iron railing of the same pattern as the gate, and a great number of white, units were quietly feeding in its centre. Following the path which skirted the lawn, they reached at a second gate, which opened into a park, in which no signs of the taste at present reigning in Germany for the English system of sequestered pleasure-grounds were at all visible. The park was bounded on both sides by tall border rather hedges of box, cut into the shape of sentinels; the sameness of these turrets being occasionally varied by the immovable form of some stone guardian, carved out of yew or laurel. Between the terraces and arched walks, aloes and orange-trees were mounted on sculptured pedestals, columns of marble, and pyramids of bay, whose dark foliage strongly contrasted with the marble statues, and the white vases shining in the sun, rose in all directions in methodical confusion. The sound of a fountain was not wanting; and large beds of the beautiful flowers abounded; but in no instance did Vivian observe that two kinds of plants were mixed together. Proceeding through a very verdant park, occasional openings, whose curving lines allowed effective glimpses of a bust or a statue, the companions at length came in sight of a house. It was a long, uneven, low building, evidently of ancient architecture. Numerous stacks of tall and fantastically-shaped chimneys rose over thick and heavy gables, which reached down lower than the middle of the elevation, forming compartments, one of them including a large modern bow-window, over which clustered in profusion the sweet and glowing blossoms of the rose and the pomegranate. Indeed the whole of the house was so completely covered with a scarlet creeper, that it was almost impossible to discern certain of what materials it was built. As Vivian was admiring a large white peacock, which, startled by their approach, had taken the opportunity of unfurling its wheeling train, a man came forward from the bow-window.

He was particularly in my description of his appearance. In height he was about five feet eight inches, and of a spare, but well-proportioned build. He had very little hair, which was highly coloured, and dressed in a manner to render more remarkable the extraordinary elevation of his continually polished forehead. His long piercing eyes were almost closed, from the fullness of his upper lids. His cheeks were sallow, his nose thin, his mouth compressed. His ears, which quite uncovered by hair, were so wonderfully large, that it would be wrong to pass them over unnoticed; as indeed were his hands and feet, which in form were quite feminine. He was dressed in a coat and waistcoat of black velvet, the upper part of his costume reaching to his thighs; and a button hole of his coat was a large bunch of rose. A small part of his flannel waistcoat protruded through an opening in his exquisitely dressed shirt, the broad collar of which, though tied with a wide black riband, did not conceal a

neck which agreed well with his beardless chin, and would not have misbecome a woman. In England we should have called his breeches buckskin. They were of a pale yellow leather, and suited his large and spur-armed cavalry boot, which fitted closely to the legs they covered, reaching over the knees of the wearer. A riband round his neck, tucked into his waistcoat pocket, was attached to a small French watch. He swung in his right hand the bow of a violin; and in the other, the little finger of which was nearly hid by a large antique ring, he held a white handkerchief strongly perfumed with violets. Notwithstanding the many feminine characteristics which I have noticed, either from the expression of the eyes, or the formation of the mouth, the countenance of this individual generally conveyed an impression of the greatest firmness and energy. This description will not be considered ridiculously minute by those who have never had an opportunity of becoming acquainted with the person of so celebrated a gentleman as Mr. BECKENDORFF.

He advanced to the prince with an air which seemed to proclaim, that as his person could not be mistaken, the ceremony of introduction was perfectly unnecessary. Bowing in the most ceremonious and courtly manner to his highness, Mr. Beckendorff, in a weak, but not displeasing voice, said that he was honoured "by the presence of Mr. von Philipson." The prince answered his salutation in a manner equally ceremonious, and equally courtly; for having no mean opinion of his own diplomatic abilities, his highness determined that neither by an excess of coldness, nor cordiality on his part, should the minister gather the slightest indication of the temper in which he had attended the interview. You see that even the bow of a diplomatist is a very serious business!

"Mr. Beckendorff," said his highness, "my letters doubtless informed you that I should avail myself of your permission to be accompanied. Let me have the honour of presenting to you my friend Mr. Grey, an English gentleman."

As the prince spoke, Beckendorff stood with his arms crossed behind him, and his chin resting upon his chest; but his eyes at the same time so raised as to look his highness full in the face. Vivian was so struck by his posture, and the expression of his countenance, that he nearly omitted to bow when he was presented. As his name was mentioned, the minister gave him a sharp sidelong glance, and moving his head very gently, he invited his guests to enter the house. The gentlemen accordingly complied with his request. Passing through the bow-window, they found themselves in a well-sized room, the sides of which were covered with shelves of richly bound books. There was nothing in the room which gave the slightest indication that the master of the library was any other than a private gentleman. Not a book, not a chair was out of its place. A purple inkstand of Sevre china, and a very highly-tooled morocco port-folio of the same colour, reposed on a rose-wood table, and that was all. No papers, no despatches, no red tape, and no red boxes. Over an ancient chimney, lined with blue china tiles, on which were represented the most grotesque figures—cows playing the harp—monkeys acting monarchs—and tall figures all legs, flying with rapidity from pursuers who were all head—

over this chimney were suspended some curious pieces of antique armour, among which, an Italian dagger, with a chased and jewelled hilt, was the most remarkable and the most precious.

"This," said Mr. Beckendorff, "is my library,"

"What a splendid poniard!" said the prince, who had no taste for books; and he immediately walked up to the chimney-piece. Beckendorff followed him, and taking down the admired weapon from its resting-place, proceeded to lecture on its virtues, its antiquity, and its beauty. Vivian seized this opportunity of taking a rapid glance at the contents of his library. He anticipated interleaved copies of Machiavel, Vattel, and Montesquieu; and the lightest works that he expected to meet with were the lying memoirs of some intriguing cardinal, or the deluding apology of an exiled minister. To his surprise he found that without an exception, the collection merely consisted of poetry and romance; and while his eye rapidly passed over, not only the great names of Germany, but also of Italy and of France, it was with pride that he remarked upon the shelves an English Shakspeare; and perhaps with still greater delight, a complete edition of the enchanted volumes of our illustrious Scott. Surprised at this most unexpected circumstance, Vivian looked with a curious eye on the unlettered backs of a row of mighty folios on a corner shelf; "These," he thought, "at least must be royal ordinances, and collected state-papers." The sense of propriety struggled for a moment with the passion of curiosity; but nothing is more difficult for the man who loves books, than to refrain from examining a volume which he fancies may be unknown to him. From the jewelled dagger, Beckendorff had now got to an enamelled breast-plate. Two to one he should not be observed; and so, with a desperate pull, Vivian extracted a volume—it was an herbal! He tried another—it was a collection of dried insects! He immediately replaced it, and staring at his host, wondered whether he really could be the Mr. Beckendorff of whom he had heard so much.

"And now," said Mr. Beckendorff, "I will show you my drawing-room."

He opened the door at the further end of the library, and introduced them to a room of a very different character. The sun, which was shining very brightly, lent additional brilliancy to the rainbow-tinted birds of paradise, the crimson mackaws, and the green parrots that glistened on the splendid India paper, which covered not only the walls, but also the ceiling of the room. Over the fire-place, a black frame, projecting from the wall and mournfully contrasting with the general brilliant appearance of the apartment, inclosed a picture of a beautiful female; and bending over its frame, and indeed partly shadowing the countenance, was the withered branch of a tree. A harpsichord, and several cases of musical instruments were placed in different parts of the room; and suspended by very broad black ribands, from a wall on each side of the picture, were a guitar and a tambourine. On a sofa of unusual size lay a Cremona; and as Mr. Beckendorff passed the instrument, he threw by its side the bow, which he had hitherto carried in his hand.

"We may as well now take something," said Mr. Beckendorff, when his guests had sufficiently

admired the room; "my pictures are in my dining-room—let us go there."

So saying, and armed this time, not only with his bow, but also with his violin, he retraced his steps through the library, and crossing a small passage, which divided the house into two compartments, he opened the door into his dining-room. The moment that they entered the room, their senses were saluted, and indeed their senses ravished, by what appeared to be a concert of a thousand birds; yet none of the winged choristers were to be seen, and not even a single cage was visible. The room, which was very simply furnished, appeared at first rather gloomy; for though lighted by three windows, the silk blinds were all drawn.

"And now," said Mr. Beckendorff, raising the first blind, "you shall see my pictures. At what do you estimate this Breughel?"

The window, which was of stained green glass, gave to the landscape an effect similar to that generally produced by the artist mentioned. The prince, who was already very puzzled by finding one who, at the same time, was both his host and his enemy, so perfectly different a character to what he had conceived, and who, being by temper superstitious, considered that this preliminary false opinion of his was rather a bad omen,—did not express any very great admiration of the gallery of Mr. Beckendorff; but Vivian, who had no ambitious hopes or fears to affect his temper, and who was delighted with the character with whom he had become so unexpectedly acquainted—good-naturedly humoured the fantasies of the minister; and said that he preferred his picture to any Breughel he had ever seen.

"I see you have a fine taste," said Mr. Beckendorff, with a very serious air, but in a most courteous tone; "you shall see my Claude!"

The rich yellow tint of the second window gave to the fanciful garden all that was requisite to make it look Italian.

"Have you ever been in Italy, sir?" asked Beckendorff.

"I have not."

"You have, Mr. von Philippeon?"

"Never south of Germany," answered the prince, who was exceedingly hungry, and eyed with a rapacious glance, the capital luncheon which he saw prepared for him.

"Well then, when either of you go, you will of course not miss the Lago Maggiore. Gaze on Isola Bella at sunset, and you will not view as fair a scene as this! And now, Mr. von Philippeon," said Mr. Beckendorff, "do me the favour of giving me your opinion of this Honthorst."

His highness would rather have given his opinion of the fine dish of stewed game which still smoked upon the table, but which he was mournfully convinced would not smoke long; or of the large cucumbers, of which he was particularly fond, and which, among many other vegetables, his anxious eye had already detected. "But," thought he, "this is the last!" and so he very warmly admired the effect produced by the flaming panes, to which Beckendorff swore that no piece ever painted by Gerard Honthorst, for brilliancy of colouring and boldness of outline, could be compared: "besides," continued Beckendorff, "mine are all animated pictures. See that cypress, waving from the gentle breeze which is now stirring—and look! look!

crimson peacock!—look! Mr. von Philip-

son looking, Mr. von——I beg pardon, Beckendorff," said the prince, with great dignifying this slight mistake in the name, from being unused to converse with such people as had not the nominal mark of nobility, sent his spleen at being so unnecessarily kept from refreshment which he so much required. "Mr. von Philipson," said Beckendorff, sud-

dening round; "all my fruits and all my pleasures, are from my own garden. Let us sit and help ourselves." Only substantial food at table was a great stunted game, which I believe I have never before. The prince seized the breast and of a young pheasant, Vivian attacked a fine hare, and Beckendorff himself cut off the fowl a partridge. The vegetables and the fruits were numerous and superb; and there really appeared to be a fair prospect of the Prince of Little making as good a luncheon as if the whole had been conducted under the auspices of Master Cook himself,—had it not been for the condensed melody of the unseen vocalists, which, excited by the sound of the knives and too evidently increased every moment. But convenience was soon removed by Mr. Beckendorff rising, and giving three loud knocks on the opposite to the one by which they had entered—immediate silence ensued.

"Clara will be here in an instant, to change plates, Mr. von Philipson," said Beckendorff, "I here she is."

Clara eagerly looked up, not with the slightest at the entrance of Clara would prove that mysterious picture in the drawing-room was a picture; but it must be confessed with a little curiosity to view the first specimen of the sex who under the roof of Mr. Beckendorff. Clara was an old woman, with rather an acid expression of countenance; very prim in her appearance, identically very precise in her manners. She had a bottle, and two wine-glasses with long stems, on the table; and having removed the plates and changed the plates, she disappeared.

"What wine is this, Mr. Beckendorff?" asked the prince, with a countenance glowing with delight—and his highness was vulgar enough to smack his lips, which, for a prince, is shocking.

"I really don't know. I never drink wine," said the prince. "I don't know! Grey, take a glass. What's your wine?—I never tasted such wine in my life. I do declare it is real Tokay!" "Probably it may be," said Mr. Beckendorff; "but it was a present from the emperor. I never tasted it."

"Dear sir, take a glass!" said the prince; "a kind and jovial temper having made me completely forget whom he was addressing, since he had come upon, and indeed every thing except the astounding circumstance that there was an individual in the room who refused his share of a bottle of real Tokay:—"My wine; take a glass."

"I never drink wine; I'm glad you like it, I doubt Clara has more."

"No, no! we must be moderate, we must be temperate," said the prince, who, though a great

of a good luncheon, had also a due respect

for a good dinner,—and consequently had no idea at this awkward hour in the day of preventing himself from properly appreciating the future banquet. Moreover, his highness, taking into consideration the very piquant sauce with which the game had been dressed, and the marks of refinement and good taste which seemed to pervade every part of the establishment of Mr. Beckendorff, did not imagine that he was much presuming, when he conjectured that there was a fair chance of his dinner being something very superior. The prince, therefore, opposed a further supply of Tokay, and contented himself for the present with assisting his Gruyère with one of the very fine looking cucumbers—his favourite cucumbers; which, though yet untasted, had not, in spite of the wine, been banished from his memory.

"You seem very fond of cucumbers, Mr. von Philipson," said Beckendorff.

"So fond of them that I prefer them to any vegetable, and to most fruits. What is more cooling—more refreshing? What—"

"I never eat them myself; but I'll tell you, if you like, what I think the best way of treating a cucumber."

His highness was the most ready, and the most graceful of pupils; and Vivian could scarcely suppress his laughter, when the prime minister, with a grave countenance, and in his peculiarly subdued voice, and somewhat precise mode of speaking, commenced instructing his political opponent upon the important topic of dressing a vegetable.

"You must be careful," said Mr. Beckendorff, "to pick out the straightest, thinnest-skinned, most seedless cucumber that you can find. Six hours before you want to eat it, put the stalk in cold water on a marble slab—not the whole cucumber—that's nonsense. Then pare it very carefully, so as to take off all the green outside and no more. Slice it as thin as possible, spread it over your dish, and sprinkle it with a good deal of white pepper, red pepper, salt, and mustard-seed. Mix some oil and common vinegar with a little Chili, and drown it in them. Open a large window very wide—and throw it all out!"

It was quite evident that Mr. von Philipson was extremely disappointed, and perhaps a little offended at the unexpected termination of Mr. Beckendorff's lecture, to which he had listened with the most interested attention. As for Vivian Grey, he did not affect to contain himself any longer, but gave way to a long and loud laugh—a laugh not so much excited by the manner in which Beckendorff had detailed the desired information, although it was extremely humorous, as by the striking contrast which the speaker and the speech afforded to the conceptions which he and his companion had formed of their host during their ride. His rather boisterous risibility, apparently, did not offend Mr. Beckendorff, on whose upper lip, for an instant, Vivian thought he detected a smile or a sneer. It was, however, only for an instant; for the minister immediately rose from table, and left the room by the same door on which his three loud knocks had previously produced so tranquillizing an effect.

The sudden arrival and appearance of some new and unexpected guests through the very mysterious portal by which Mr. Beckendorff had vanished, not only were the source of fresh entertainment to our hero, but also explained the character of the apart-

ment, which, from its unceasing melody, had so much excited his curiosity. These new guests were a crowd of piping bullfinches, Virginia nightingales, trained canaries, Java sparrows, and Indian lories; which having been freed from their cages of golden wire by their fond master, had fled, as was their custom, from his superb aviary to pay their respects and compliments at his daily levee.

The table was immediately covered, and the prince immediately annoyed. Nothing did he detest so much as the whole feathered race; and now, as far as he could observe, he might as well have visited a bird-catcher as Mr. Beckendorff. The white pheasants, and the white peacock, could have been borne; but as for the present intrusion, a man had better live in Noah's ark than in the liberties of an aviary. The prince was quite right; it was extremely annoying. A couple of bullfinches respectively perched on each of his shoulders, and commenced a most thrilling and jacobinical hymn of liberty, in celebration of their release; and an impudent little canary attacked his cucumber. As if this were not sufficient to produce instantaneous insanity, a long-tailed scarlet lory lighted on his head, and commenced its usual fondling tricks, by rubbing its beak in the prince's hair, fluttering its wing on his cheek, and pecking his eyebrows. As it got more delighted, it shrieked its joy into his ear with such shrillness, that he started from his chair; and the little favourite consequently slipping down, to save itself from falling, hung upon his lip by his beak. As soon as his highness had extricated himself from this unpleasant situation, the lory, making a perch on the back of his hair, regained its first position.

Just as the prince was asking Vivian to hasten to his assistance, Mr. Beckendorff returned.—“Never mind, Mr. von Philipson,” said the minister, “never mind; it only wants to make a nest, poor thing!”

“But I do mind, Mr. Beckendorff; I detest birds, and this annoying little animal, I beg to inform you, is exceedingly troublesome.”

“Where!” said the Prime Minister of Reisenberg, and the troublesome lory flew to his shoulder. “I am glad to see that you like birds, sir,” said Beckendorff to Vivian; for our good hero, good-naturedly humouring the tastes of his host, was impartially dividing the luxuries of a peach among a crowd of gaudy and greedy little sparrows. “You shall see my favourites,” continued Beckendorff, and tapping rather loudly on the table, he held out the forefinger of each hand. The two bullfinches, which were still singing on the shoulder of the prince, recognised the signal, and immediately hastened to their perch.

“My dear!” trilled out one little songster; and it raised its speaking eyes to its delighted master.

“My love!” warbled the other, marking its affection by looks equally personal.

These monosyllables were repeated fifty times; at each one Beckendorff, with sparkling eyes, and a countenance radiant with delight, triumphantly looked round at Vivian, as if the frequent reiteration were a proof of the sincerity of the affection of these singular friends.

At length, to the prince's great relief, Mr. Beckendorff's feathered friends having finished their *dessert*, were sent back to their cages, with a strict injunction not to trouble their master at present with their voices—an injunction which, to Vivian's

great surprise, was obeyed to the letter; and when the door was closed, few persons in the world could have been persuaded that the next room was an aviary.

“I am proud of my peaches, Mr. von Philipson,” said Beckendorff, recommending the fruit to his guest's attention; then, rising from the table, he threw himself on the sofa, and began humming a tune in a very low voice. Presently he took up his Cremona, and using the violin as a guitar, accompanied himself in a very beautiful air, but not in a more audible tone. While Mr. Beckendorff was singing, he seemed quite unconscious that any person was in the room; and the prince, who detested music, certainly gave him no hint, either by his approbation or his attention, that he was listened to. Vivian, however, like most unhappy men, did love music with all his spirit's strength; and actuated by this feeling, and the interest which he began to take in the character of Mr. Beckendorff, he could not, when that gentleman had finished his air, refrain from very sincerely saying “encore.”

Beckendorff started and looked around, as if he were for the first moment aware that any being had heard him.

“Encore!” said he, with a kind sneer; “who ever could sing or play the same thing twice! Are you fond of music, sir?”

“Very much so, indeed: I fancied I recognised that air. You are an admirer, I imagine, of Mozart!”

“I never heard of him: I know nothing of those gentry. But if you really like music, I'll play you something worth listening to.”

Mr. Beckendorff began a beautiful air very adagio, gradually increasing the time in a kind of variation, till at last his execution became so wonderfully rapid, that Vivian, surprised at the mere mechanical action, rose from his chair in order better to examine the player's management and motion of his bow. Exquisite as were the tones, enchanting as were the originality of his variations, and the perfect harmony of his composition, it was nevertheless extremely difficult to resist laughing at the ludicrous contortions of his face and figure. Now, his body bending to the strain, he was at one moment with his violin raised in the air, and the next instant with the lower nut almost resting upon his foot. At length, by well-proportioned degrees the air died away into the original soft cadence; and the player becoming completely entranced in his own performance, finished by sinking back on the sofa, with his bow and violin raised over his head. Vivian would not disturb him by his applause. An instant after, Mr. Beckendorff, throwing down the instrument, rushed through an opened window into the garden.

As soon as Beckendorff was out of sight, Vivian looked at the prince; and his highness, elevating his eyebrows, screwing up his mouth, and shrugging his shoulders, altogether presented a very comical picture of a puzzled man.

“Well, my dear friend,” said he, “this is rather different to what we expected.”

“Very different indeed; but much more amusing.”

“Humph!” said the prince, very slowly, “I do not think it exactly requires a ghost to tell us that Mr. Beckendorff is not in the habit of going to court. I don't know how he is accustomed to conduct himself when he is honoured by a visit from the grand-duke; but I am quite sure, that

regards his treatment of myself, to say the least, incognito is very well observed."

Mr. von Philipson," said the gentleman of whom they were speaking, putting his head in at window; "you shall see my blue passion-flower.—We'll take a walk round the garden." The prince gave Vivian a look, which seemed to pose they must go; and accordingly they sped into the garden.

You do not see my garden in its glory," said Beckendorff, stopping before the bow-window be library; "this spot is my strong point; had been here earlier in the year, you might have dined with me my invaluable crescents of tulips such colours! such brilliancy! so defined! And year I had three king-tulips; their elegantly-need creamy cups, I have never seen equalled. I then my double variegated ranunculuses; my cinths of fifty bells, in every tint, single and ble; and my favourite stands of auriculas, so e and powdered, that the colour of the velvet es was scarcely discoverable! The blue passion-flower is, however, now very beautiful. You that summer-house, sir," continued he, turning to Vivian, "the top is my observatory; you sleep in that pavilion to-night, so you had better take notice how the walk winds."

The passion-flower was trained against the summer-house in question.

There!" said Mr. Beckendorff, and he stood dicing with outstretched arms, "the latter days a beauty, for the autumn frosts will soon stop lower: Pray, Mr. von Philipson, are either you our friend a botanist?"

Why," said the prince, "I am a great admirer of flowers, but I cannot exactly say that—"

Ah! I see you are no botanist. The flower of beautiful plant continues only one day, but e is a constant succession from July to the end of autumn: and if this fine weather continues—y, sir, how is the wind?"

I really cannot say," said the prince; "but I think the wind is either—"

Ah! do you know how the wind is, sir?" continued Beckendorff to Vivian.

I think, sir, that it is—"

Ah! I see it's westerly.—Well! if this weather inue, the succession may still last another th. You will be interested to know, Mr. von ipson, that the flower comes out at the same t with the leaf, on a peduncle near three inches ; round the centre of it are two radiating rms; look, look, sir! the inner inclining towards centre column—now examine this well, and e with you in a moment." So saying, Mr. kendorff, running with great rapidity down the t, jumped over the railing, and in a moment coursing across the lawn, towards the river, in sperate chase after a dragon-fly.

Mr. Beckendorff was soon out of sight; and after ering half an hour in the vicinity of the blue ion-flower, the prince proposed to Vivian that should quit the spot. "As far as I can obe," continued his highness, "we might as well the house. No wonder that Beckendorff's er is on the wane, for he appears to me to be ving childish. Surely he could not always have a this frivolous creature!"

I really am so overwhelmed with astonish- t," said Vivian, "that it is quite out of my pow- amist your highness in any supposition. But

I should recommend you not to be too hasty in your movements. Take care that staying here does not affect the position which you have taken up, or retard the progress of any measures on which you have determined, and you are safe. What will it injure you, if, with the chance of achieving the great and patriotic purpose to which you have devoted your powers and energies, you are subjected for a few hours to the caprices, or even rudeness, of any man whatever. If Beckendorff be the character which the world gives him credit to be, I do not think he can imagine that you are to be deceived twice; and if he do imagine so, we are convinced that he will be disappointed. If, as you have supposed, not only his power is on the wane, but his intellect also, four-and-twenty hours will convince us of the fact; for in less than that time your highness will necessarily have conversation of a more important nature with him. I strenuously recommend, therefore, that we continue here to-day, although," added Vivian, smiling, "I have to sleep in his observatory."

After walking in the garden about an hour, the prince and Vivian again went into the house, imagining that Beckendorff might have returned by another entrance; but he was not there. The prince was very much annoyed; and Vivian, to amuse himself, had recourse to the library. After re-examining the armour, looking at the garden through the painted windows, conjecturing who might be the original of the mysterious picture, and what could be the meaning of the withered branch, the prince was fairly worn out. The precise dinner hour he did not know; and notwithstanding repeated exertions, he had hitherto been unable to find the blooming Clara. He could not flatter himself, however, that there were less than two hours to kill before the great event took place; and so, quite miserable, and heartily wishing himself back again at Turripurva, he prevailed upon Vivian to throw aside his book, and take another walk.

This time they extended their distance, stretched out as far as the river, and explored the adjoining woods; but of Mr. Beckendorff they saw and heard nothing. At length they again returned: it was getting dusk. They found the bow-window of the library closed. They again entered the dining-room; and, to their surprise, found no preparations for dinner. This time the prince was more fortunate in his exertions to procure an interview with Madam Clara, for that lady almost immediately entered the room.

"Pray, my good madam," inquired the prince; "has your master returned?"

"Mr. Beckendorff is in the library, sir," said the old lady, very pompously.

"Indeed! we don't dine in this room, then?"

"Dine, sir!" said the good dame, forgetting her pomposity in her astonishment.

"Yes—dine," said the prince.

"La! sir; Mr. Beckendorff never takes any thing after noon meal."

"Am I to understand, then, that we are to have no dinner?" asked his highness, angry and agitated.

"Mr. Beckendorff never takes any thing after his noon meal, sir; but I'm sure if you and your friend are hungry, sir, I hope there's never a want in this house."

"My good lady, I am hungry, very hungry indeed; and if your master, I mean Mr. von—"

is Mr. Beckendorff, has such a bad appetite that he can satisfy himself with picking, once a day, the breast of a pheasant; why, if he expect his friends to be willing, or even able to live on such fare,—the least that I can say is, that he is very much mistaken; and so, therefore, my good friend Grey, I think we had better order our horses, and be off."

"No occasion for that, I hope," said Mrs. Clara, rather alarmed at the prince's passion; "no want, I trust, ever here, sir; and I make no doubt you'll have dinner as soon as possible; and so, sir, I hope you'll not be hasty."

"Hasty! I have no wish to be hasty; but as for disarranging the whole economy of the house, and getting up an extemporaneous meal for me—I cannot think of it. Mr. Beckendorff may live as he likes, and if I stay here, I am contented to live as he does. I do not wish him to change his habits for me, and I shall take care that, after to-day, there will be no necessity for his doing so. However, absolute hunger can make no compliments; and therefore I will thank you, my good madam, to let me and my friend have the remains of that cold game, if they be still in existence, on which we lunched, or, as you term it, took our noon meal this morning; and which, if it were your own cooking, Mrs. Clara, I assure you, as I observed to my friend at the time, did you infinite credit."

The prince, although his gentlemanly feeling had, in spite of his hunger, dictated a deprecation of Mrs. Clara's making a dinner merely for himself, still thought that a seasonable and deserved compliment to the lady might assist in bringing about a result, which, notwithstanding his politeness, he very much desired; and that was the production of another specimen of her culinary accomplishments. Having behaved, as he considered, with such moderation and dignified civility, he was, it must be confessed, rather astounded, when Mrs. Clara, duly acknowledging his compliment by her courtesy, was sorry to inform him that she dared give no refreshment in this house, without Mr. Beckendorff's special order.

"Special order! why! surely your master will not grudge me the cold leg of a pheasant!"

"Mr. Beckendorff is not in the habit of grudging any thing," answered the house-keeper, with offended majesty.

"Then why should he object?" asked the prince.

"Mr. Beckendorff is the best judge, sir, of the propriety of his own regulations."

"Well, well!" said Vivian, more interested for his friend than himself, "there is no difficulty in asking Mr. Beckendorff."

"None in the least, sir," answered the house-keeper, "when he is awake."

"Awake!" said the prince, "why! is he asleep now?"

"Yes, sir, in the library."

"And how long will he be asleep?" asked the prince, with great eagerness.

"It is uncertain; he may be asleep for hours—he may wake in five minutes; all I can do is to watch."

"But, surely in a case like the present, you can wake your master?"

"I could not wake Mr. Beckendorff, sir, if the house were on fire. No one can enter the room when he is asleep."

"Then how can you possibly know when he is awake."

"I shall hear his violin immediately, sir."

"Well, well! I suppose it must be so," Grey, I wish we were in Turriparva, that is all I know. Men of my station have no business to be paying visits to the sons of the Lord knows who! peasant shop-keepers, and pedagogues!"

The Prince of Little Lilliput thought that mankind were solely created to hunt and to fight; and unless you could spear a boar or owned a commission, you were not included in his list of proper men. We smile at what we consider the narrow-minded ideas of a German prince; yet, perhaps, if we inquire, we shall find that mankind, on an average, are influenced in all countries by the same feelings, and in the same degree; and the definition of a *gentleman* by a hero of St. James-street, if not exactly similar, will not be less unwise and less ridiculous, than the Prince of Little Lilliput's description of a *proper man*. An officer in the guards once told me, that no person was a gentleman, who was not the son of a man who had twenty thousand a year landed property. Convinced that his declaration was sincere, I respected his prejudices, and did not dispute his definition. I should have behaved the same, had I been in Africa, and had a Hottentot dandy declared, that no person was to be visited who dared to devour the smoking entrails of a sheep in less than a couple of mouthfuls.

As a fire was blazing in the dining-room, which Mrs. Clara informed them Mr. Beckendorff never omitted having every night in the year, the prince and his friend imagined that they were to remain there, and they consequently did not attempt to disturb the slumbers of Mr. Beckendorff. Resting his feet on the hobs, his highness, for the fifth time, declared that he wished he had never left Turriparva; and just when Vivian was on the point of giving up, in despair, the hope of consoling him, Mrs. Clara entered, and proceeded to lay the cloth.

"Your master is awake, then?" asked the prince, very quickly.

"Mr. Beckendorff has been long awake, sir! and dinner will be ready immediately."

His highness's countenance brightened, and in a short time the supper appearing, the prince again fascinated by Mrs. Clara's cookery and Mr. Beckendorff's wine, forgot his chagrin, and regained his temper.

In about a couple of hours Mr. Beckendorff entered.

"I hope that Clara has given you wine you like, Mr. von Philipson?"

"Excellent, my dear sir! the same bin, I'll answer for that."

Mr. Beckendorff had his violin in his hand; but his dress was much changed. His great boots being pulled off, exhibiting the white silk stockings which he invariably wore; and his coat had given place to the easier covering of a very long and handsome brocade dressing-gown. He drew a chair round the fire, between the prince and Vivian. It was a late hour, and the room was only lighted by the glimmering coals, for the flames had long died away. Mr. Beckendorff sat for some time without speaking, gazing very earnestly on the decaying embers. Indeed, before many minutes had elapsed, complete silence prevailed, for both the endeavours of the prince, and of Vivian, to promote conversation had been unsuccessful. At length the master of the house turned round

prince, and pointing to a particular mass of said, "I think, Mr. von Philipson, that is the ptest elephant I ever saw. We will ring bell for some coals, and then have a game of it."

he prince was so surprised by Mr. Beckendorff's remark, that he was not sufficiently struck by strangeness of his proposition; and it was when he heard Vivian professing his ignorance of the game, that it occurred to him that to at whist was hardly the object for which he travelled from Turriparva.

An Englishman not know whist?" said Mr. Beckendorff: "Ridiculous!—you do know it. I'm thinking of the stupid game they play of Boston whist. Let us play! Mr. von Philipson, I know, has no objection."

But, my good sir," said the prince, "although to conversation I may have no objection to in a little amusement, still it appears to me it has escaped your memory that whist is a which requires the co-operation of four persons."

Not at all! I take dummy. I'm not sure if it of the finest way of playing the game."

The table was arranged, the lights brought, the is produced, and the Prince of Little Lilliput, dly to his surprise, found himself playing whist a Mr. Beckendorff. Nothing could be more . The minister would neither bet nor stake; the immense interest which he took in every that was played, most ludicrously contrasted the rather sullen looks of the prince, and the sleepy ones of Vivian. Whenever Mr. Beckendorff played for dummy, he always looked with most searching eye into the next adversary's, as if he would read his cards in his features. The first rubber lasted an hour and a half—three games, which Mr. Beckendorff, to his triumph, lly won. In the first game of the second rubber Vivian blundered; in the second he revoked; in the third, having neglected to play, and beloudly called upon, and rated both by his part and Mr. Beckendorff, he was found to be asleep. Beckendorff threw down his hand with a loud dash, ch roused Vivian from his slumber. He apologized for his drowsiness; but said that he was so remely sleepy that he must retire. The prince, o longed to be with Beckendorff alone, winked robaton of his intention.

"Well!" said Beckendorff, "you spoiled the ber. I shall ring for Clara. Why you are all fond of going to bed, I cannot understand. I e not been to bed these thirty years."

Vivian made his escape; and Beckendorff, pity- his degeneracy, proposed to the prince, in a e which seemed to anticipate that the offer would st with instantaneous acceptance—double dum- —this, however, was too much.

"No more cards, sir, I thank you," said the ice; "if, however, you have a mind for an hour's version, I am quite at your service."

"I am obliged to you—I never talk—good night, . von Philipson."

Mr. Beckendorff left the room. His highness ld contain himself no longer. He rang the

"Pray, Mrs. Clara," said he, "where are my es?"

"Mr. Beckendorff will have no quadrupeds with- mile of the house, except Owlface."

"How do you mean?—let me see the man- servant."

"The household consists only of myself, sir."

"Why! where is my luggage, then?"

"That has been brought up, sir; it is in your room."

"I tell you, I must have my horsea."

"It is quite impossible to-night, sir. I think, sir, you had better retire; Mr. Beckendorff may not be home again these six hours."

"What! is your master gone out?"

"Yes, sir, he is just gone out to take his ride."

"Why! where is his horse kept, then?"

"It's Owlface, sir."

"Owlface, indeed! what, is your master in the habit of riding out at night?"

"Mr. Beckendorff rides out, sir, just when it happens to suit him."

"It is very odd I cannot ride out when it happens to suit me! However, I'll be off to-morrow; and so, if you please, show me my bed-room at once."

"Your room is the library, sir."

"The library! why, there's no bed in the library."

"We have no beds, sir; but the sofa is made up."

"No beds! well! it's only for one night. You are all mad, and I am as mad as you for coming here."

CHAPTER XXII.

THE morning sun peeping through the window of the little summer-house, roused its inmate at an early hour; and finding no signs of Mr. Beckendorff and his guest having yet arisen from their slumbers, Vivian took the opportunity of strolling about the gardens and the grounds. Directing his way along the margin of the river, he soon left the lawn, and entered some beautiful meadows, whose dewy verdure glistened in the brightening beams of the early sun. Crossing these, and passing through a gate, he found himself in a rural road, whose lofty hedge-rows, rich with all the varieties of wild fruit and flower, and animated with the cheering presence of the busy birds chirping from every bough and spray, altogether presented a scene which greatly reminded him of the soft beauties of his own country. With some men, to remember is to be sad; and unfortunately for Vivian Grey, there were few objects which with him did not give rise to associations of a most painful nature. Of what he was thinking as he sat on a bank with his eyes fixed on the ground, it is needless to inquire. He was roused from his reverie by the sound of a trotting horse. He looked up, but the winding road prevented him at first from seeing the steed, which evidently was approaching. The sound came nearer and nearer; and at length, turning a corner, Mr. Beckendorff came in sight. He was mounted on a very strong built, rough, and particularly ugly pony, with an obstinate mane, which, defying the exertions of groom or ostler, fell in equal divisions on both sides of his bottle neck; and a large white face, which, combined with its blind, or blinking vision, had earned for it the euphonious and complimentary title of Owlface.

Both master and steed must have travelled hard and far, for both were covered with dust and mud from top to toe—from mane to hoof. Mr. Beckendorff seemed surprised at meeting Vivian, and pulled up his pony as he reached him.

"An early riser, I see, sir. Where is Mr. von Philipson?"

"I have not yet seen him, and imagined that both he and yourself had not yet risen."

"Hum! how many is it to noon?" asked Mr. Beckendorff, who always spoke astronomically.

"More than four, I imagine."

"Pray, do you prefer the country about here to Turriparva?"

"Both, I think, are very beautiful."

"You live at Turriparva?" asked Mr. Beckendorff.

"When I am there," answered Vivian, smiling, who was too practised a head to be *pumped* even by Mr. Beckendorff.

"Pray, has it been a fine summer at Turriparva?"

"It has been a fine summer, I believe, everywhere."

"I am afraid Mr. von Philipson finds it rather dull here."

"I am not aware of it."

"He seems a very!—" said Beckendorff, looking keenly in his companion's face. But Vivian did not supply the desired phrase; and so the minister was forced to finish the sentence himself—"a very—gentlemanly sort of man!" A low bow was the only response.

"I trust, sir, I may indulge the hope," continued Mr. Beckendorff, "that you will honour me with your company another day."

"You are most exceedingly obliging, sir."

"Mr. von Philipson is fond, I think, of a country life?" said Beckendorff.

"Most men are, I think, sir."

"I suppose he has no innate objection to live occasionally in a city?"

"Few men have, I think, sir."

"You probably have known him long?"

"Not long enough to wish our acquaintance at an end."

"Hum!"

They proceeded in silence for about five minutes, and then Beckendorff again turned round, and this time with a direct question.

"I wonder if Mr. von Philipson can make it convenient to honour me with his company another day. Can you tell me?"

"I think the best person to inform of that, sir, would be his highness himself," said Vivian, using his friend's title purposely to show Mr. Beckendorff how very ridiculous he considered his present use of the incognito.

"You think so, sir, do you?" answered Beckendorff, very sarcastically.

They had now arrived at the gate by which Vivian had reached the door.

"Your course, sir," said Mr. Beckendorff, "lies that way. I see, like myself, you are no great talker. We shall meet at breakfast." So saying, the minister set spurs to his pony, and was soon out of sight.

When Vivian reached the house, he found the *bow window* of the library thrown open; and as he approached, he saw Mr. Beckendorff enter the room and bow to the prince. His highness had passed a most excellent night, in spite of not sleep-

ing in a bed; and he was at this moment commencing a most delicious breakfast. His ill-humour had consequently all vanished. He had made up his mind that Beckendorff was a madman; and although he had given up all the secret and flattering hopes which he had dared to entertain when the interview was first arranged, he nevertheless did not regret his visit, which on the whole had been very amusing, and had made him acquainted with the person and habits, and, as he believed, the intellectual powers of a man with whom, most probably, he should soon be engaged in open hostility. Vivian took his seat at the breakfast table, and Beckendorff stood conversing with them with his back to the fire-place, and occasionally, during the pauses of conversation, pulling the strings of his violin with his fingers. It did not escape Vivian's observation that the minister was particularly courteous, and even attentive to his highness; and that he endeavoured by his quick, and more communicative answers, and occasionally by a stray observation, to encourage the good humour which was visible on the cheerful countenance of the prince.

"Have you been long up, Mr. Beckendorff?" asked the prince; for his host had resumed his dressing-gown and slippers.

"I generally see the sun rise."

"And yet you retire late!—out riding last night, I understand!"

"I never go to bed."

"Indeed!" said the prince. "Well, for my part, without my regular rest I am nothing. Have you breakfasted, Mr. Beckendorff?"

"Clara will bring my breakfast immediately."

The dame accordingly soon appeared, bearing a tray with a basin of boiling water, and one very large thick biscuit. This, Mr. Beckendorff having well soaked in the hot fluid, eagerly devoured; and then taking up his violin, amused himself until his guests had finished their breakfast.

When Vivian had ended his meal, he left the prince and Mr. Beckendorff alone, determined that his presence should not be the occasion of the minister any longer retarding the commencement of business. The prince, who by a private glance had been prepared for his departure, immediately took the opportunity of asking Mr. Beckendorff, in a very decisive tone, whether he might flatter himself that he could command his present attention to a subject of great importance. Mr. Beckendorff said that he was always at Mr. von Philipson's service; and drawing a chair opposite him, the prince and Mr. Beckendorff now sat on each side of the fire-place.

"Hem!" said the prince, clearing his throat; and he looked at Mr. Beckendorff, who sat with his heels close together, his toes out square, his hands resting on his knees, which, as well as his elbows, were turned out, his shoulders bent, his head reclined, and his eyes glancing.

"Hem!" said the Prince of Little Lilliput. "In compliance, Mr. Beckendorff, with your wish, developed in the communication received by me at the — inst., I assented in my answer to the arrangement then proposed; the object of which was to use your own words, to facilitate the occurrence of an oral interchange of the sentiments of various parties interested in certain proceedings, by which interchange it was anticipated that the mutual interests might be respectively considered and fully

red. Prior, Mr. Beckendorff, to either of us into any detail upon those points of probability, which will, in all likelihood, form the mental features of this interview, I wish to draw your attention to the paper which I had the honor of presenting to his royal highness, and which is alluded to in your communication of the 10th. The principal heads of that document I have brought with me abridged in this paper." The prince handed to Mr. Beckendorff a pamphlet, consisting of about sixty foolscap pages, closely written. The minister bowed very humbly as he took it from his highness's hand; and then, without even looking at it, he laid it on the table.

"Now, sir, I perceive," continued the prince, "acquainted with its contents; and it will, I think, be unnecessary for me at present to expatiate upon their individual expediency, or to argue in favor of their particular adoption. And, sir, when we view the progress of the human mind, when we take into consideration the quick march of intellect, and the wide expansion of enlightened views and principles—when we take a bird's-eye view of the history of man from the earliest ages to the present moment, I feel that it would be folly in me to receive for an instant, that the measures proposed and recommended in that paper, will not receive the approbation of his royal highness."

As to the exact origin of slavery, Mr. Beckendorff, I confess that I am not, at this moment, prepared distinctly to speak. That the divinity of our religion was its decided enemy, I am sure, is clear. That the slavery of ancient times was the origin of the feudal service of a modern period, is a point on which men may perhaps have not precisely made up their minds. As to the exact state of the ancient German people, Tacitus affords us a great deal of most interesting information. Whether or not, certain reasons which I have brought with me marked in Germany, are incontestable evidences that our ancestors enjoyed or understood the practice of a well regulated liberty, is a point on which I shall be happy to receive the opinion of so distinguished a statesman as Mr. Beckendorff. In step forward, as I have felt it my duty to do, as an advocate of popular rights and national privilege, I am desirous to prove that I have not become a staid enemy of innovation and the professor of revolutionary doctrines. The passages of the Roman constitution in question, and an ancient charter of the emperor Charlemagne, are, I consider, decisive sufficient precedents for the measures which I thought proper to sanction by my approval, and support by my influence. A minister, Mr. Beckendorff, must take care that in the great realities, the minds of his countrymen do not lag behind their own. We must never forget the powers and capabilities of man. On this very subject, some centuries ago, savages clothed in furs were committing cannibalism in a forest. Do not forget, I repeat, that it is the business of us to whom Providence has allotted the noble possession of power and influence—that it is our duty, our duty, Mr. Beckendorff—to be the guardians of our weaker fellow-creatures—that power is a trust—that we are accountable to exercise—that from the people, and for the people, all springs, and all must exist; and that, we conduct ourselves with the requisite

wisdom, prudence, and propriety, the whole system of society will be disorganized; and this country, in particular, fall a victim to that system of corruption and misgovernment, which has already occasioned the destruction of the great kingdoms mentioned in the Bible; and many other states besides—Greece, Rome, Carthage, &c."

Thus ended the peroration of an harangue consisting of an incoherent arrangement of imperfectly-remembered facts, and misunderstood principles; all gleaned by his highness from the enlightening articles of the *Reisenberg* journals. Like Brutus, the Prince of Little Lilliput paused for a reply.

"Mr. von Philipson," said his companion, when his highness had finished, "you speak like a man of sense." Having given this answer, Mr. Beckendorff rose from his seat, and walked straight out of the room.

The prince, at first, took the answer for a compliment; but Mr. Beckendorff not returning, he began to have a very faint idea that he was neglected. In this uncertainty, he rang the bell for his old friend Clara.

"Mrs. Clara! where is your master?"

"Just gone out, sir."

"How do you mean?"

"He has gone out with his gun, sir."

"You are quite sure he has gone out?"

"Quite sure, sir. I took him his coat and boots myself."

"I am to understand, then, that your master has gone out?"

"Yea, sir, Mr. Beckendorff has gone out. He will be home for his noon meal."

"That is enough!—Grey!" hallooed the indignant prince, darting into the garden; "Grey! Grey! where are you, Grey?"

"Well, my dear prince," said Vivian; "what can possibly be the matter?"

"The matter! insanity can be the only excuse; insanity can alone account for his preposterous conduct. We have seen enough of him. The repetition of absurdity is only wearisome. Pray assist me in getting our horses immediately."

"Certainly, if you please; but remember you brought me here as your friend and counsellor. As I have accepted the trust, I cannot help being sensible of the responsibility. Before, therefore, you finally resolve upon departure, pray let me be fully acquainted with the circumstance which has impelled you to this sudden resolution."

"Willingly, my good friend, could I only command my temper; and yet to fall into a passion with a madman is almost a mark of madness: but his manner and his conduct are so provoking and so puzzling, that I cannot altogether repress my irritability. And that ridiculous incognito! why I sometimes begin to think that I really am Mr. von Philipson! An incognito, forsooth! for what? to deceive whom? His household apparently only consists of two persons, one of whom has visited me in my own castle; and the other is a cross old hag, who would not be able to comprehend my rank if she were aware of it. But to the point! When you left the room, I was determined to be trifled with no longer, and I asked him in a firm voice, and very marked manner, whether I might command his immediate attention to very important business. He professed to be at my service. I opened the affair by taking a conveyance.

yet definite review of the principles in which my political conduct had originated, and on which it was founded. I flattered myself that I had produced an impression. Sometimes, my dear Grey, we are in a better cue for these expositions than at others, and to-day I was really unusually felicitous. My memory never deserted me. I was, at the same time, luminous and profound; and while I was guided by the philosophical spirit of the present day, I showed by my various reading, that I respected the experience of antiquity. In short, I was perfectly satisfied with myself; and with the exception of one single point about the origin of slavery, which unfortunately got entangled with the feudal system, I could not have got on better had Sievers himself been at my side. Nor did I spare Mr. Beckendorff; but, on the contrary, my good fellow, I said a few things which, had he been in his senses, must, I imagine, have gone home to his feelings. Do you know, I finished by drawing his own character, and showing the inevitable effects of his ruinous policy: and what do you think he did?"

"Left you in a passion?"

"Not at all. He seemed very much struck by what I had said, and apparently understood it. I have heard that in some species of insanity the patient is perfectly able to comprehend every thing addressed to him, though at that point his sanity ceases, and he is unable to answer or to act. This must be Beckendorff's case; for no sooner had I finished, than he rose up immediately, and saying that I spoke like a man of sense, he abruptly quitted the room. The housekeeper says he will not be at home again till that infernal ceremony takes place, called the noon meal. Now do not you advise me to be off as soon as possible?"

"It will require some deliberation. Pray did you not speak to him last night?"

"Ah! I forgot that I had not been able to speak to you since then. Well! last night, what do you think he did? When you were gone, he had the insolence to congratulate me on the opportunity then afforded of playing double dummy; and when I declined his proposition, but said that if he wished to have an hour's conversation I was at his service, he very coolly told me that he never talked, and bade me good night! Did you ever know such a madman! He never goes to bed. I only had a sofa. How the deuce did you sleep?"

"Well, and safely, considering that I was in a summer-house without lock or bolt."

"Well! I need not ask you now as to your opinion of our immediately getting off. We shall have, however, some trouble about our horses, for he will not allow a quadruped near the house, except some monster of an animal that he rides himself; and, by St. Hubert! I cannot find out where our steeds are. What shall we do?" But Vivian did not answer. "Grey," continued his highness, "what are you thinking of? Why don't you answer?"

"Your highness must not go," said Vivian, shaking his head.

"Not go! why so, my good fellow?"

"Depend upon it, you are wrong about Beckendorff. That he is a humorist, there is no doubt; but it appears to me to be equally clear, that his queer habits and singular mode of life are not of late adoption. What he is now, he must have been these ten, perhaps these twenty years, perhaps

more. Of this there are a thousand proofs about us. As to the overpowering cause which has made him the character he appears at present, it is needless for us to inquire. Probably some incident in his private life, in all likelihood connected with the mysterious picture. Let us be satisfied with the effect. If the case be as I state it, in his private life and habits Beckendorff must have been equally incomprehensible and equally singular at the very time that, in his public capacity, he was producing such brilliant results, as at the present moment. Now, then, can we believe him to be insane? I anticipate your objections. I know you will enlarge upon the evident absurdity of his inviting his political opponent to his house, for a grave consultation on the most important affairs, and then treating him as he has done you; when it must be clear to him that you cannot be again duped, and when he must feel that were he to amuse you for as many weeks as he has days, your plans and your position would not be injuriously affected. Be it so. Probably a humorist like Beckendorff cannot, even in the most critical moment, altogether restrain the bent of his capricious inclinations. However, my dear prince, I will lay no stress upon this point. My opinion, indeed my conviction is, that Beckendorff acts from design. I have considered his conduct well; and I have observed all that you have seen, and more than you have seen, and keenly. Depend upon it, that since you assented to the interview, Beckendorff has been obliged to shift his intended position for negotiation. Some of the machinery has gone wrong. Fearful, if he had postponed your visit, that you should imagine that he was only again amusing you, and consequently listen to no future overture, he has allowed you to attend a conference for which he is not prepared. That he is making desperate exertions to bring the business to a point, is my firm opinion; and you would perhaps agree with me, were you as convinced as I am, that since we parted last night our host has been to Reisenberg and back again."

"To Reisenberg, and back again!"

"Ay! I rose this morning at an early hour, and imagining that both you and Beckendorff had not yet made your appearance, I escaped from the grounds, intending to explore part of the surrounding country. In my stroll I came to a narrow winding road, which I am convinced lies in the direction towards Reisenberg; there, for some reason or other, I loitered more than an hour, and very probably should have been too late for breakfast, had I not been recalled to myself by the approach of a horseman. It was Beckendorff, covered with dust and mud. His horse had been evidently hard ridden. I did not think much of it at the time, because I supposed he might have been out for three or four hours, and hard worked, but I nevertheless was struck by his appearance; and when you mentioned that he went out riding at a late hour last night, it immediately occurred to me, that had he come home at one or two o'clock, it was not very probable that he would have gone out again at four or five. I have no doubt that my conjecture is correct—Beckendorff has been at Reisenberg."

"You have placed this business in a new and important light," said the prince, his eyes hopes reviving; "what, then, do you advise me to do?"

"To be quiet. If your own view of the case be right, you can act as well to-morrow or the next day as this moment; on the contrary, if mine be the correct one, a moment may enable Beckendorff himself to bring affairs to a crisis. In either case, I should recommend you to be silent, and in no manner to allude any more to the object of your visit. If you speak, you only give opportunities to Beckendorff of ascertaining your opinions and your inclinations; and your silence, after such frequent attempts on your side to promote discussion upon business, will soon be discovered by him to be systematic. This will not decrease his opinion of your sagacity and firmness. The first principle of negotiation is to make your adversary respect you."

After long consultation, the prince determined to follow Vivian's advice; and so firmly did he adhere to his purpose, that when he met Mr. Beckendorff at the noon meal, he asked him, with a very unembarrassed voice and manner, "what sport he had had in the morning?"

The noon meal again consisted of a single dish, as exquisitely dressed, however, as the preceding one. It was a splendid haunch of venison.

"This is my dinner, gentlemen," said Beckendorff; "let it be your luncheon: I have ordered your dinner at sunset."

After having eaten a slice of the haunch, Mr. Beckendorff rose from table, and said, "We will have our wine in the drawing-room, Mr. von Philipson, and then you will not be disturbed with my birds."

He left the room.

To the drawing-room, therefore, his two guests soon adjourned. They found him busily employed with his pencil. The prince thought it must be a chart or a fortification at least, and was rather surprised when Mr. Beckendorff asked him the magnitude of Mirac in Boötes: and the prince, concealing his utter ignorance of the subject, the minister threw aside his unfinished planisphere, and drew his chair to them at the table. It was with great pleasure that his highness perceived a bottle of his favourite Tokay; and with no little astonishment he observed, that to-day, there were three wine-glasses placed before them. They were of peculiar beauty, and almost worthy, for their elegant shapes and great antiquity, of being included in the collection of the Duke of Schoss Coburnsberger.

"Your praise of my cellar, sir," said Mr. Beckendorff, very graciously, "has made me turn wine-drinker." So saying, the minister took up one of his rare glasses and held it to the light. His keen, scanning eye, detected an almost invisible cloud on the side of the delicate glass, and jerking it across him, he flung it into the farthest corner of the room—it was shivered into a thousand pieces. He took up the second glass, examined it very narrowly, and then sent it, with equal force, after its companion. The third one shared the same fate. He rose and rang the bell.

"Clara!" said Mr. Beckendorff, in his usual tone of voice, "some clean glasses, and sweep away that litter in the corner."

"He is mad, then!" thought the Prince of little Lilliput, and he shot a glance at his companion, which Vivian could not misunderstand.

After exhausting their bottle, in which they were assisted to the extent of one glass by their

host, who drank Mr. von Philipson's health with cordiality, they assented to Mr. Beckendorff's proposition of visiting his fruitery.

To the prince's great relief, dinner-time soon arrived; and having employed a couple of hours on that meal very satisfactorily, he and Vivian adjourned to the drawing-room, having previously pledged their honour to each other, that nothing should again induce them to play dummy whist. Their resolutions and their promises were needless. Mr. Beckendorff, who was sitting opposite the fire, when they came into the room, neither by word nor motion acknowledged that he was aware of their entrance. Vivian found refuge in a book; and the prince, after having examined and re-examined the brilliant birds that figured on the drawing-room paper, fell asleep upon the sofa. Mr. Beckendorff took down the guitar, and accompanied himself in a low voice for some time; then he suddenly ceased, and stretching out his legs, and supporting his thumbs in the arm-holes of his waistcoat, he leaned back in his chair, and remained perfectly motionless, with his eyes fixed upon the picture. Vivian, in turn, gazed upon this singular being, and the fair pictured form which he seemed to idolize. Was he, too, unhappy? Had he, too, been bereft in the hour of his proud and perfect joy? Had he, too, lost a virgin bride?—His agony overcame him, the book fell from his hand, and he groaned aloud! Mr. Beckendorff started, and the prince awoke. Vivian, confounded, and unable to overpower his emotions, uttered some hasty words, explanatory, apologetical, and contradictory, and retired. In his walk to the summer-house, a man passed him. In spite of a great cloak, Vivian recognised him as their messenger and guide; and his ample mantle did not conceal his riding-boots, and the spurs which glistened in the moonlight.

It was an hour past midnight when the door of the summer-house softly opened, and Mr. Beckendorff entered. He started when he found Vivian still undressed, and pacing up and down the little chamber. The young man made an effort, when he witnessed an intruder, to compose a countenance whose agitation could not be concealed.

"What, are you up again?" said Mr. Beckendorff. "Are you ill?"

"Would I were as well in mind as in body! I have not yet been to rest. We cannot command our feelings at all moments, sir; and at this, especially, I felt that I had a right to consider myself alone."

"I most exceedingly regret that I have disturbed you," said Mr. Beckendorff, in a very kind voice, and in a manner which responded to the sympathy of his tone. "I thought that you had been long asleep. There is a star which I cannot exactly make out. I fancy it must be a comet, and so I ran to the observatory; but let me not disturb you," and Mr. Beckendorff was retiring.

"You do not disturb me, sir. I cannot sleep—pray ascend."

"O, no! never mind the star. But if you really have no inclination to sleep, let us sit down and have a little conversation; or perhaps we had better take a stroll. It is a very warm night." As he spoke, Mr. Beckendorff gently put his arm within Vivian's, and led him down the steps.

"Are you an astronomer, sir?" asked Beckendorff.

"I can tell the Great Bear from the Little Dog; but I confess that I look upon the stars rather in a poetical than a scientific spirit."

"Hum! I confess I do not."

"There are moments," continued Vivian, "when I cannot refrain from believing that these mysterious luminaries have more influence over our fortunes than modern times are disposed to believe. I feel that I am getting less sceptical, perhaps I should say more credulous, every day; but sorrow makes us superstitious."

"I discard all such fantasies," said Mr. Beckendorff; "they only tend to enervate our mental energies, and paralyze all human exertion. It is the belief in these, and a thousand other deceptions I could mention, which teach man that he is not the master of his own mind, but the ordained victim, or the chance sport of circumstances; that makes millions pass through life unimpressive as shadows; and has gained for this existence the stigma of a vanity which it does not deserve."

"I wish that I could think as you do," said Vivian; "but the experience of my life forbids me. Within only these last two years, my career has, in so many instances, indicated that I am not the master of my own conduct; that, no longer able to resist the conviction which is hourly impressed on me, I recognise in every contingency the preordination of my fate."

"A delusion of the brain!" said Beckendorff, very quickly. "Fate, destiny, chance, particular and special providence—idle words! Dismiss them all, sir! A man's fate is his own temper; and according to that will be his opinion as to the particular manner in which the course of events is regulated. A consistent man believes in destiny—a capricious man in chance."

"But, sir, what is a man's temper? It may be changed every hour. I started in life with very different feelings to those which I profess at this moment. With great deference to you, I imagine that you mistake the effect for the cause; for surely temper is not the origin, but the result of those circumstances of which we are all the creatures."

"Sir, I deny it. Man is not the creature of circumstances. Circumstances are the creatures of men. We are free agents, and man is more powerful than matter. I recognise no intervening influence between that of the established course of nature and my own mind. Truth may be distorted—may be stifled—be suppressed. The invention of cunning deceptions may, and in some instances does, prevent man from exercising his own powers. They have made him responsible to a realm of shadows, and a suitor in a court of shades. He is ever dreading authority which does not exist, and fearing the occurrence of penalties which there are none to enforce. But the mind that dares to extricate itself from these vulgar prejudices, that proves its loyalty to its Creator by devoting all its adoration to his glory—such a spirit as this becomes a master-mind, and that master-mind will invariably find that circumstances are its slaves."

"Mr. Beckendorff, yours is a very bold philosophy, of which I, myself, was once a votary. How successful in my service, you may judge by finding me a wanderer."

"Sir! your present age is the age of error: your whole system is founded on a fallacy: you believe that a man's temper can change. I deny it. If

you have ever seriously entertained the views which I profess; if, as you lead me to suppose, you have dared to act upon them, and failed; sooner or later, whatever may be your present conviction and your present feelings, you will recur to your original wishes and your original pursuits. With a mind experienced and matured, you may in all probability be successful; and then, I suppose, stretching your legs in your easy chair, you will at the same moment be convinced of your own genius, and recognise your own destiny."

"With regard to myself, Mr. Beckendorff, I am convinced of the erroneousness of your views. It is my opinion, that no one who has dared to think, can look upon this world in any other than a mournful spirit. Young as I am, nearly two years have elapsed since, disgusted with the world of politics, I retired to a foreign solitude. At length, with passions subdued, and, as I flatter myself, with a mind matured, convinced of the vanity of all human affairs, I felt emboldened once more partially to mingle with my species. Bitter as my lot had been, as a philosopher, I had discovered the origin of my misery in my own unbridled passions; and, tranquil and subdued, I now trusted to pass through life as certain of no fresh sorrows, as I was of no fresh joys. And yet, sir, I am at this moment sinking under the infliction of unparalleled misery—misery which I feel I have a right to believe was undeserved. But why expatiate to a stranger on sorrow which must be secret! I deliver myself up to my remorseless fate."

"What is grief?" said Mr. Beckendorff;—"it is excited by the fear of some contingency, instead of grieving, a man should exert his energies, and prevent its occurrence. If, on the contrary, it be caused by an event, that which has been occasioned by any thing human, by the co-operation of human circumstances, can be, and invariably is, removed by the same means. Grief is the agony of an instant; the indulgence of grief the blunder of a life. Mix in the world, and in a month's time you will speak to me very differently. A young man, you meet with disappointment,—in spite of all your exalted notions of your own powers, you immediately sink under it. If your belief of your powers were sincere, you should have proved it by the manner in which you struggled against adversity, not merely by the mode in which you laboured for advancement. The latter is but a very inferior merit. If in fact you wish to succeed, success, I repeat, is at your command. You talk to me of your experience; and do you think that my sentiments are the crude opinions of an unpractised man? Sir! I am not fond of conversing with any person; and, therefore, far from being inclined to maintain an argument in a spirit of insincerity, merely for the sake of a victory of words. Mark what I say; it is truth. No minister ever yet fell but from his own inefficiency. If his downfall be occasioned, as it generally is, by the intrigues of one of his own creatures, his downfall is merited for having been the dupe of a tool, which, in all probability, he should never have employed. If he fell through the open attacks of his political opponents, his downfall is equally deserved, for having occasioned by his impolicy the formation of a party; for having allowed it to be formed; or for not having crushed it when formed. No conjuncture can possibly occur, however fearful, however tremendous,

ar, from which a man, by his own energy, not extricate himself—as a mariner by the use of his cannon can dissipate the impend-
-spout!”

CHAPTER XXIII.

on the third day of the visit to Mr. Beckendorf that gentleman was composing his : his noon meal with his favourite Cre-
-i in a moment of rapture raising his in-
-high in air, that the door was suddenly
-en, and Essper George rushed into the
-the intruder, the moment that his eye
-vian, flew to his master, and seizing him
-a, commenced and continued a loud shout
-ion, accompanying his scream the whole
-kind of quick dance; which, though not
-clamorous as the Pyrrhic, nevertheless
-drowned the scientific harmony of Mr.
-riff.

ectly astounded were the three gentlemen
-pected entrance, that some moments
-e either of them found words at his com-
-at length the master of the house spoke.
-von Philipson, I beg the favour of being
-who this person is!”

ince did not answer, but looked at Vivian
-istress; and just as our hero was about to

Beckendorff the requisite information,
-George, taking up the parable himself,
-opportunity of explaining the mystery.

am I!—who are you? I am an honest
-no traitor; and if all were the same, why

: would be no rogues in Reisenberg, and
-ouses in woods and by-places to wheedle
-de to. Who am I!—a man. There's an

re's a leg! Can you see through a wood
-it! if so, yours is a better eye than mine.

eat an unskinned hare, or dine on the
-f a bounding stag! if so, your teeth are

an mine. Can you hear a robber's foot-
-he's kneeling before murder? or can you

he snow falling on midsummer's day! if
-ars are finer than mine. Can you run

amais!—can you wrestle with a bear!—
-swim with an otter!—if so, I'm your

How many cities have you seen!—how
-aves have you gulled!—what's the ave-

of lawyer's breath in all the capitals of
-om!—which is dearest, bread or justice!

lo men pay more for the protection of life,
-itself!—who first bought gold with dia-

-Is cheater a staple at Constantinople as
-enna!—and what's the difference between

merchant and a Greek pirate? Tell me
-nd I will tell you who went in mourning

at the death of the last comet. Who
-ed!”

gony of the prince and Vivian, while
-George with inconceivable rapidity address-

Beckendorff these choice queries, was
-able. Once Vivian tried to check him,

in. He did not repeat his attempt, for
-efficiently employed in restraining his own

and keeping his own countenance; for in
-he mortification and anger that Essper's

re had excited in him, still an unfortunate
-taste for the ludicrous, did not allow him

to be perfectly insensible to the humour of the
-scene. Mr. Beckendorff listened very quietly till
-Essper had finished—he then rose.

“Mr. von Philipson,” said he, “as a personal
-favour to yourself, and to my own great in-
-convenience, I consented that in this interview you
-should be attended by a friend. I did not reckon
-upon your servant, and it is impossible that I can
-tolerate his presence for a moment. You know
-how I live, and that my sole attendant is a female.
-I allow no male servants within this house. Even
-when his royal highness honours me with his
-presence, he is unattended. I desire that I am
-immediately released from the presence of this
-buffoon.”

So saying, Mr. Beckendorff left the room.

“Who are you?” said Essper, following him,
-with his back bent, his head on his chest, and his
-eyes glancing. The imitation was perfect.

As soon as Mr. Beckendorff had retired, the
-prince raised his eyes to heaven, and clasped his
-hands with a look of great anguish.

“Well, Grey! here's a business. What is to
-be done?”

“Essper,” said Vivian, “your conduct is inex-
-cusable, the mischief that you have done irreparable,
-and your punishment shall be most severe.”

“Severe! Why, what day did your highness
-sell your gratitude for a silver groschen? Severe!
-Is this the return for finding you out, and saving
-you from a thousand times more desperate gang
-than that baron at Ems? Severe! Severe indeed
-will be your lot when you are in a dungeon in
-Reisenberg Castle, with black bread for roast veni-
-son, and sour water for Rhenish! Severe, in-
-deed.”

“Why, what are you talking about?”

“Talking about! About bloody treason, and
-arch traitors, and an old scoundrel who lives in a
-lone lane, and dares not look you straight in the
-face. Why, his very blink is enough to hang him
-without trial! Talking about! About a young
-gentleman, whom, if he were not my master, no
-one, with my leave, should say was not as neat a
-squire as ever kissed a maid instead of going to
-church.”

“Essper, you will be so good as to drop all this
-gesticulation, and let this rhodomontade cease im-
-mediately; and then in distinct terms inform his
-highness and myself of the causes of this unpa-
-ralleled intrusion.”

The impressiveness of Vivian's manner produced
-a proper effect; and except that he spoke some-
-what affectedly slow, and ridiculously precise,
-Essper George delivered himself with great clear-
-ness.

“You see, your highness never let me know
-that you were going to leave, and so, when I found
-that you didn't come back, I made bold to speak
-to Mr. Arnelm when he came home from hunting;
-but I couldn't get enough breath out of him to stop
-a ladybird on a rose-leaf. I didn't much like it,
-your honour, for I was among strangers, and so
-were you, you know. Well, then I went to Mas-
-ter Rodolph: he was very kind to me, seeing me
-in low spirits, and thinking me, I suppose, in love,
-or in debt, or that I had done some piece of mis-
-chief, or had something or other preying on my
-mind; he comes to me, and says, ‘Essper,’ said he
—you remember Master Rodolph's voice, your
-highness!”

"Go on, go on—to the point. Never let me hear Master Rodolph's name again."

"Yes, your highness! Well, well! he said to me, 'Come and dine with me in my room;' says I, 'I will.' A good offer should never be refused, unless we have a better one at the same time. Whereupon, after dinner, Master Rodolph said to me—'We'll have a bottle of Burgundy for a treat.' You see, sir, we were rather sick of the Rhenish. Well, your highness, we were free with the wine; and Master Rodolph, who is never easy, except when he knows every thing, must be trying, you see, to get out of me what it was that made me so down in the mouth. I, seeing this, thought I'd put off the secret to another bottle; which being produced, I did not conceal from him any longer what was making me so low. 'Rodolph,' said I, 'I don't like my young master going out in this odd way: he's of a temper to get into scrapes, and I should like very much to know what he and the prince (saving your highness's presence) are after. They have been shut up in that cabinet these two nights, and though I walked by the door pretty often, devil a bit of a word ever came through the key-hole; and so, you see,—Rodolph,' said I, 'it requires a bottle or two of Burgundy to keep my spirits up.' Well, your highness, strange to say, no sooner had I spoken, than Master Rodolph,—he has been very kind to me—very kind indeed—he put his head across the little table—we dined at the little table on the right hand of the room as you enter—"

"Go on."

"I am going on. Well! he put his head across the little table, and said to me in a low whisper, and cocking his odd-looking eye at the same time; 'I tell you what, Essper, you're a damned sharp fellow!' and so, giving a shake of his head, and another wink of his eye, he was quiet. I smelt a rat, but I didn't begin to pump directly, but after the third bottle—'Rodolph,' said I, 'with regard to your last observation, (for we had not spoken lately, Burgundy being too fat a wine for talking,) we are both of us damned sharp fellows; I dare say now, you and I are thinking of the same thing.' 'No doubt of it,' said Rodolph. And so, your highness, he agreed to tell me what he was thinking of, on condition that I should be equally frank afterwards. Well, your highness, he told me that there were sad goings on at Turriparva."

"The deuce!" said the prince.

"Let him tell his story," said Vivian.

"Sad goings on at Turriparva! He wished that his highness would hunt more, and attend less to politics; and then he told me quite confidentially, that his highness the prince, and heaven knows how many other princes besides, had leagued together, and were going to dethrone the grand-duke, and that his master was to be made king, and he, Master Rodolph, prime minister. Hearing all this, and duly allowing for a tale over a bottle, I made no doubt, as I find to be the case, that your highness was being led into some mischief; and as I know that conspiracies are always unsuccessful, I've done my best to save my master; and I beseech you, upon my knees, my darling sir, to get out of the scrape as soon as you possibly can." Here Essper George threw himself at Vivian's feet, and entreated him in the most earnest terms, to quit the house immediately.

"Was ever any thing so absurd and mischief-

ous!" ejaculated the prince; and then he conversed with Vivian for some time in a whisper. "Essper," at length Vivian said, "you have committed one of the most perfect and most injurious blunders that you could possibly perpetrate. The mischief which may result from your imprudent conduct is incalculable. How long is it since you have thought proper to regulate your conduct on the absurd falsehoods of a drunken steward? His highness and myself wish to consult in private; but on no account leave the house. Now mind me; if you leave this house without my permission, you forfeit the little chance which remains of being retained in my service."

"Where am I to go, sir?"

"Stay in the passage."

"Suppose (here he imitated Beckendorff) comes to me."

"Then open the door, and come into this room."

Essper looked very doubtful, and rather disappointed. He quitted the room, and the prince and Vivian thought themselves alone; but Essper suddenly opened the door, and said in a loud and very lamentable tone, with a most rueful expression of countenance—"O, my young master! beware! beware!"

"Well," said the prince, when the door was at length shut; "one thing is quite clear. He does not know who Beckendorff is."

"So far satisfactory; but I feel the force of your highness's observations. It is a most puzzling case. To send him back to Turriparva would be madness: the whole affair would be immediately revealed over another bottle of Burgundy with Master Rodolph: in fact, your highness's visit would be a secret to no one in the country: your host would be soon discovered, and the evil consequences are incalculable. I know no one to send him to at Reisenberg; and if I did, it appears to me, that the same objections equally apply to his proceeding to that city as to his returning to Turriparva. What is to be done? Surely, some demon must have inspired him. We cannot now request Beckendorff to allow him to stay here; and if we did, I am convinced, from his tone and manner, that nothing could induce him to comply with our wish. The only course to be pursued is certainly an annoying one; but as far as I can judge, it is the only mode by which very serious mischief can be prevented. Let me proceed forthwith to Reisenberg with Essper. Placed immediately under my eye, and solemnly adjured by me to silence, I think I can answer, particularly when I give him a gentle hint of the station of Beckendorff, for his preserving the confidence with which it will now be our policy partially to intrust him. It is, to say the least, awkward and distressing to leave you alone, but what is to be done? It does not appear that I can now be of any material service to you. I have assisted you as much, and more than we could reasonably have supposed it would have been in my power to have done, by throwing some light upon the character and situation of Beckendorff. With the clue to his conduct, which my chance meeting with him yesterday morning has afforded us, the only point for your highness to determine is, as to the length of time you will resolve to wait for his communication. As to your final agreement together, with your highness's settled views and decided purpose, all the difficulty of negotiation will be on his side. Whatever, my dear

prince," continued Vivian, with a very significant voice and very marked emphasis; "whatever, my dear prince, may be your secret wishes, be assured that to attain them in your present negotiation, you have only to be firm. Let nothing divert you from your purpose, and the termination of this interview must be gratifying to you."

The Prince of Little Lilliput was very disinclined to part with his shrewd counsellor, who had already done him considerable service; and he strongly opposed Vivian's proposition. His opposition, however, like that of most other persons, was unaccompanied by any suggestion on his part; and as both agreed that something must be done, it of course ended in the prince's being of opinion that Vivian's advice must be followed. Having once come to a resolution, it was always a rule with Vivian Grey to carry it into effect as quickly as possible; and he therefore suggested that they should immediately go to Beckendorff, and inform him of the result of their consultation. The prince was really very much affected by this sudden and unexpected parting with one for whom, though he had known him for so short a time, he began to entertain a very sincere regard. "I owe you my life," said the prince; "and perhaps more than my life; and here we are about suddenly to part, never to meet again. I wish I could get you to make Turriparva your home. You should have your own suite of rooms, your own horses, your own servants; and never feel for an instant that you were not master of all around you. In truth," continued the prince, with great earnestness, "I wish, my dear friend, you would really think seriously of this. You know you could visit Vienna, and even Italy, and yet return to me. Max would be delighted to see you: he loves you already, and Sievers and his library would be at your command. Agree to my proposition, my dear friend."

"I cannot express to your highness how sensible I am of your kindness. Your friendship I sincerely value, and shall never forget; but I am too unhappy and unlucky a being to burden any one with my constant presence. Adieu! or will you go with me to Beckendorff?"

"O, go with you by all means! But," said the prince, taking a ruby ring of great antiquity off his finger, "I should feel happy if you would wear this for my sake."

The prince was so much affected at the thought of parting with Vivian, that he could scarcely speak. Vivian accepted the ring with a cordiality which the kind-hearted donor deserved; and yet our hero unfortunately had had rather too much experience of the world, not to be aware that, most probably, in less than another week his affectionate friend would not be able to recall his name under an hour's recollection. Such are friends! The moment that we are not at their side, we are neglected; and the moment that we die, we are forgotten!

They found Mr. Beckendorff in his library. In apprizing Mr. Beckendorff of his intention of immediately quitting his roof, Vivian did not omit to state the causes of his sudden departure. These not only accounted for the abruptness of his movement, but also gave Beckendorff an opportunity of preventing its necessity, by allowing Es-per to remain. But the opportunity was not seized by Mr. Beckendorff. The truth was, that gentleman had a particular wish to see Vivian out of his house. In allowing the Prince of Little Lilliput to be at-

tended during the interview by a friend, Beckendorff had prepared himself for the reception of some brawny jagd junker, or some thick-headed chamberlain, who he reckoned would act rather as an encumbrance than an aid to his opponent. It was with great mortification, therefore, that he found him accompanied by a shrewd, experienced, wary, and educated Englishman. A man like Beckendorff soon discovered that Vivian Grey's was no common mind. His conversation with him, of the last night, had given him high notions of his powers: and the moment that Beckendorff saw Es-per George enter the house, he determined that he should be the cause of Vivian leaving it. There was also another and weighty reason for Mr. Beckendorff desiring that the Prince of Little Lilliput should at this moment be left to himself.

"Mr. Grey will ride on to Reisenberg immediately," said the prince; "and, my dear friend, you may depend upon having your luggage by the day after to-morrow. I shall be at Turriparva early to-morrow morning, and it will be my first care."

This was said in a very loud voice, and both gentlemen watched Mr. Beckendorff's countenance as the information was given; but no emotion was visible.

"Well, sir, good morning to you," said Mr. Beckendorff; "I am very sorry you are going. Had I known it sooner, I would have given you a letter. If you are likely to travel much, I would recommend you to wear flannel waistcoats. Perhaps you do wear them. Mr. von Philipson," said Beckendorff, "do me the favour of looking over that paper." So saying, Mr. Beckendorff put some official report into the prince's hand; and while his highness' attention was attracted by this sudden request, Mr. Beckendorff laid his finger on Vivian's arm, and said, in a lower tone, "I shall take care that you find a powerful friend at Reisenberg!"

BOOK THE SEVENTH.

CHAPTER I.

As Vivian left the room, Mr. Beckendorff was seized with an unusual desire to converse with the Prince of Little Lilliput, and his highness was consequently debarred the consolation of walking with his friend as far as the horses. At the little gate Vivian and Es-per encountered the only male attendant who was allowed to approach the house of Mr. Beckendorff. As Vivian quietly walked his horse up the rough turf road, he could not refrain from recurring to his conversation of the previous night; and when he called to mind the adventures of the last six days, he had new cause to wonder at, and perhaps to lament over, his singular fate. In that short time he had saved the life of a powerful prince, and been immediately signaled out, without any exertion on his part, as the object of that prince's friendship. The moment he arrives at his castle, by a wonderful contingency, he becomes the depository of important state secrets, and assists in a consultation of the utmost importance with one of the most powerful ministers in Europe. And now the object of so much friendship, confidence, and honour, he is suddenly on the road to the capital of the state of which his late host is the prime minister, and his friend the chief subject.

without even the convenience of a common letter of introduction; and with no prospect of viewing with even the usual advantages of a common traveller, one of the most interesting of European courts.

When he had proceeded about halfway up the turf lane, he found a private road to his right; which, with that spirit of adventure for which Englishmen are celebrated, he immediately resolved must not only lead to Reisenberg, but also carry him to that city much sooner than the regular high road. He had not advanced far up this road before he came to the gate at which he had parted with Beckendorff on the morning that gentleman had roused him so unexpectedly from his reverie in a green lane. He was surprised to find a horseman dismounting at the gate. Struck by this singular circumstance, the appearance of the stranger was not unnoticed. He was a tall and well-proportioned man, and as the traveller passed he stared Vivian so full in the face, that our hero did not fail to remark his very handsome countenance, the expression of which, however, was rather vacant and unpleasing. He was dressed in a riding-coat, exactly similar to the one always worn by Beckendorff's messenger; and had Vivian not seen him so distinctly, he would have mistaken him for that person. The stranger was rather indifferently mounted, and carried his cloak and a small portmanteau at the back of his saddle.

"I suppose it is the butler," said Essper George, who now spoke for the first time since his dismissal from the room. Vivian did not answer him; not because he entertained any angry feeling on account of his exceedingly unpleasant visit. By no means:—it was impossible for a man like Vivian Grey to cherish an irritated feeling for a second. The Emperor Augustus, (I quote from my last school theme;) the Emperor Augustus had a habit, whenever he was on the point of falling into a passion, of repeating his alphabet. It was then the fashion for emperors to be somewhat more erudite than they are at present. Whether the Roman's recipe for keeping his temper could be pursued by some modern emperors, or many private persons that I could mention, is a point on which I do not feel qualified to decide. Saying the alphabet, for instance, accurately in the language of Thibet, where the characters are of two kinds—the *uchem* and the *umin*—and consist principally of arbitrary guttural and nasal sounds, would be no joke. My plan to moderate a temper is much briefer than that of imperial Cæsar. You have only to repeat nine letters, and spell *human life*; and if there be a man who can grieve or rage when any thing so inexpressibly ludicrous is recalled to his attention, why then he deserves to live all his life in a volcano, and snuff high-dried cayenne instead of pounded tobacco.

But Vivian Grey did not exchange a syllable with Essper George, merely because he was not in the humour to speak. He could not refrain from musing on the singular events of the last few days; and, above all, the character of Beckendorff particularly engrossed his meditation. Their extraordinary conversation of the preceding night excited in his mind new feelings of wonder, and revived emotions which he thought were dead, or everlastingly dormant. Apparently, the philosophy on which Beckendorff had regulated his extraordinary career, and by which he had arrived at his almost

unparalleled pitch of greatness, was exactly the same with which he himself, Vivian Grey, had started in life; which he had found so fatal in its consequences: which he believed to be so vain in its principles. How was this? What radical error had he committed? It required little consideration. Thirty, and more than thirty years had passed over the head of Beckendorff, ere the world felt his power, or indeed was conscious of his existence. A deep student, not only of man in detail, but of man in groups—not only of individuals, but of nations—Beckendorff had hived up his ample knowledge of all subjects which could interest his fellow-creatures; and when that opportunity, which in this world occurs to all men, occurred to Beckendorff, he was prepared. With acquirements equal to his genius, Beckendorff depended only upon himself, and succeeded. Vivian Grey, with a mind inferior to no man's, dashed on the stage, in years a boy, though in feelings a man. Brilliant as might have been his genius, his acquirements necessarily were insufficient. He could not depend only upon himself; a consequent necessity arose to have recourse to the assistance of others; to inspire them with feelings which they could not share and humour and manage the petty weakness which he himself could not experience. His colleagues were, at the same time, to work for the gratification of their own private interests, the most palpable of all abstract things; and to carry into execution a great purpose, which their feeble minds, interested only by the first point, cared not to comprehend. The unnatural combination failed; and its originator fell. To believe that he could recur again to the hopes, the feelings, the pursuits of his boyhood, he felt to be the vainest of delusions. It was the expectation of a man like Beckendorff—whose career, though difficult, though hazardous, had been uniformly successful—of a man who mistook cares for grief, and anxiety for sorrow.

The travellers entered the city at sunset. Proceeding through an ancient and unseemly town, full of long, narrow, and ill-paved streets, and black uneven built houses, they ascended the hill, on the top of which was situated the new and Residence town of Reisenberg. The proud palace, the white squares, the architectural streets, the new churches, the elegant opera house, the splendid hotels, and the gay public gardens full of busts, vases, and statues, and surrounded by an iron railing cast out of the cannon taken from both sides during the war by the Reisenberg troops, and now formed into pikes and fusces, glittering with gilded heads—these shining in the setting sun, produced an effect which, at any time, and in any place, would have been beautiful and striking: but on the present occasion were still more so, from the remarkable contrast they afforded to the ancient, gloomy, and filthy town through which Vivian had just passed; and where, from the lowliness of its situation, the sun had already set. There was as much difference between the old and new town of Reisenberg, as between the old barbarous margrave and the new and noble grand-duke.

A man is never sooner domesticated than in a first-rate hotel, particularly on the Continent: where, in fact, life is never domestic, and where doing every day as you do at a table d'hôte, at which half of the respectable housekeepers in the city attend, you feel from this circumstance that there is no mode of life to be preferred to the one that you

ion obliges you to adopt. In London it is times different; and a man retiring, after his lounge, to his solitary meal at Long's or Stea's, is apt sometimes to feel lonely, particularly he has not an engagement for the evening, claret is not in the most superb condition. A hot, bright claret! solace of the soul, and art's best friend! How many suicides hast prevented! how many bruised spirits and ing hearts has thy soft and soothing flow ad and made whole! Man, do thy worst—woman, do thy best—one consolation always na. Long bills and libels, a duel and a dun, a woman and a boring man are evils, and worst—as also are a rowing father and a surly pert daughters and manœuvring mothers. dislike old maids, few dislike young ones. have a partiality for taxes; but this is a nation-vance, and if judiciously arranged, does not upon the individual. Sermons on Sunday oper and pleasant, if not over long. I only one man who loves a losing card. Poetry : enduring, particularly if it be a tragedy, and us laugh. A rabid poetaster, foaming over a te, none can tolerate. Yet bills and slander, duns, and dungeons, and bores and green-flames, disorganized families, old maids and raids, and grinding taxes, sermons and traged and bards and cards, all can be borne if we only forget their noise and nonsense in the cries of thy oblivious stream! By stream, I the stream of claret. From the length of the ice, it might be misunderstood; and if any n our chill winter clime, at any time find this lie cold within its accustomed receptacle, after every third glass, let him warm it with "Cogniac.

hill winter clime" is, after all, a vulgar error, nerely brought in to round the period. Our phere, like our taste, has of late much improv- d it is probable, that when our present monarch ncluded his architectural labours by perfectly ing brick from all outward appearance, imate proportionately improving, an Italian ay illumine our palaces of stucco. By phrase I do not mean to sneer at modern on. Some wiseheads laugh at our plaster, lk of our unhappy deficiency in marble. I o know which of the boasted cities of the ean continent is built of this vaunted marble? myself, the only difference that I ever ob- l between our own new streets and the eleva- f foreign cities, is, that our stucco being of a superior quality, and kept in a much superior ion, produces a general effect which their d and peeling walls never can. But we are ctins of smoke, and the Italians have a mag- it climate! True! they have a sky like izzar's purple robe, and a sea blue enough to a modern poet a bedlamite. They have a owered with myrtle, and glittering with aloe, aliant with orange, and lemon, and citron

They have all these, and a thousand other : besides. The Italians live in a garden of ; but it is a paradise which they will never by plucking the golden fruit. All their e-consists in confession, and all their food in oni. What can you expect from such a peo- A length of time elapses before the action or e affects their stucco; but when it is affected, e'er renovated. The boasted palladium pa-

laces are all of stucco, and look like the lonely and dilapidated halls of Irish lords.

The result of midnight promenades, whether philosophical or poetical, analytical or amatory, is usually the same—a cold; and as Vivian Grey sat shivering in his chair on the evening of his arrival at Reisenberg, he sent Mr. Beckendorff and his theory, his politics, his philosophy, and his summer-house, to the devil, with a most hearty imprecation. It is astonishing how a little indisposition unfits us for meditation. Man with a headache, a cold, or a slight spasm, is not exactly in the humour to pile Ossa upon Pelion, and scale the skies. The perfectibility of the species seems never at a more woful discount than on a morning after a debauch; and ourselves never less like reasoning animals than when suffering under indigestion. Nothing is more ludicrous than a philosopher with the tooth-ache,—except perhaps a poet with the gout.

Easper George, who, in a much more serious illness, had already proved himself to Vivian the most skilful of nurses, was now of infinite use. Though having the greatest contempt for the power and professors of medicine when in perfect health, Vivian, now that he was indisposed, was quite ready to accept the proffered assistance of the first quack who presented himself. The landlord of the hotel had a relation who, since the war, had given up his profession of farrier, and commenced that of physician. This disciple of Esculapius was speedily introduced to our hero, as the first physician at Reisenberg; and judging by his appearance that his patient was a man of blood, he proceeded to prescribe for him the remedies usually applied to a first-rate courser. This indeed was the grand and sole principle of Dr. von Hoofstetstein's pharmacopœia. Considering his present patients as horses, he arranged them in classes according to their station in society. A substantial burgher, went for a stout cavalry charger; a peasant, for a suttler's hack; a lawyer or ignoble official, was treated as attentively as the steed of an aid-de-camp; and the precedent for a recipe for a prime minister, might be found in that of his former general's crack charger. Prime ministers, however, were persons whom Von Hoofstetstein seldom had the pleasure of killing; for he was not the court-physician. Seeing that Vivian had a cold and slight fever, he ordered him a very *recherché* mash, and wished him good morning. Easper George saved our hero from a dose strong enough to have reduced a cart-horse to a lady's jennet; and by quickly extricating his master from the fatal grasp of this Galen of fetlocks, whose real origin he suspected from the odd manner in which he felt a pulse, his action strangely resembling a delicate examination of a hoof—Easper, perhaps, prevented the history of Vivian Grey from closing with the present chapter.

On the second day after his arrival at Reisenberg, Vivian received the following letter from the Prince of Little Lilliput. His luggage did not accompany the epistle.

"MR. VON GREY.

"MY DEAR FRIEND,—By the time you have received this, I shall have returned to Turripava. My visit to a certain gentleman was prolonged for one day. I never can convey to you by words the sense I entertain of the value of your friendship, and of your services; I trust that time will afford me opportunities of testi-

fying it by my actions. I return home by the same road by which we came; you remember how excellent the road was, as indeed are all the roads in Reisenberg; that must be confessed by all. I fear that the most partial admirers of the old regime cannot say as much for the convenience of travelling in the time of our fathers.—Good roads are most excellent things, and one of the first marks of civilization and prosperity. The Emperor Napoleon, who, it must be confessed, was after all no common mind, was celebrated for his roads. You have doubtless admired the Route Napoleon on the Rhine, and if you travel into Italy, I am informed that you will be equally, and even more struck by the passage over the Simplon, and the other Italian roads. Reisenberg has certainly kept pace with the spirit of the time; nobody can deny that; and I confess to you, that the more I consider the subject, it appears to me that the happiness, prosperity, and content of the state, are the best evidences of the wisdom and beneficent rule of a government. Many things are very excellent in theory, which are quite the reverse in practice, and even ridiculous. And while we should do our utmost to promote the cause and uphold the interests of rational liberty, still, at the same time, we should ever be on our guard against the crude ideas and revolutionary systems of those who are quite inexperienced in that sort of particular knowledge which is necessary for all statesmen. Nothing is so easy as to make things look fine on paper,—we should never forget that: there is a great difference between high sounding generalities, and laborious details. Is it reasonable to expect that men who have passed their lives dreaming in colleges and old musty studies, should be at all calculated to take the head of affairs, or know what measures those at the head of affairs ought to adopt?—I think not. A certain personage, who, by-the-by, is one of the most clear-headed, and most perfect men of business that I ever had the pleasure of being acquainted with; a real practical man, in short; he tells me that Professor Skyrocket, whom you will most likely see at Reisenberg, wrote an article in the Military Quarterly Review which is published there, on the probable expenses of a war between Austria and Prussia, and forgot the commissariat altogether. Did you ever know any thing so ridiculous? What business have such fellows to meddle with affairs of state? They should certainly be put down: that I think none can deny. A liberal spirit in government is certainly a most excellent thing; but we must always remember that liberty may degenerate into licentiousness. Liberty is certainly an excellent thing,—that all admit; but, as a certain person very well observed, so is physic, and yet it is not to be given at all times, but only when the frame is in a state to require it. People may be as unprepared for a wise and discreet use of liberty, as a vulgar person may be for the management of a great estate unexpectedly inherited: there is a great deal in this, and in my opinion there are cases in which to force liberty down a people's throat, is presenting them, not with a blessing, but a curse. I shall send your luggage on immediately. It is very probable that I may be in town at the end of the week, for a short time. I wish much to see, and to consult you, and therefore hope that you will not leave Reisenberg before you see

"Your faithful and obliged friend,

"LITTLE LILLIPUT."

Two days after the receipt of this letter, Esser George ran into the room with greater animation than he was usually accustomed to exhibit in the chamber of an invalid; and with a much less solemn physiognomy than he had thought proper to assume since his master's arrival at Reisenberg.

"Lord, sir! whom do you think I have just met?"

"Whom?" asked Vivian with eagerness, for, as is always the case when such questions are asked us, he was thinking of every person in the world except the right one. It might be—

"To think that I should see him!" continued Esser.

"It is a man then," thought Vivian;—"who is it at once, Esser?"

"I thought your highness would not guess; it will quite cure you to hear it—Master Rodolph."

"Master Rodolph!"

"Ay! and there's great news in the wind."

"Which, of course, you have confidentially extracted from him. Pray let us have it."

"The Prince of Little Lilliput is coming to Reisenberg," said Esser.

"Well! I had some idea of that before," said Vivian.

"O! then your highness knows it all, I suppose," said Esser, with a look of great disappointment.

"I know nothing more than I have mentioned," said his master.

"What! does not your highness know that the prince has come over; that he is going to live at court: and be, Heaven knows what! that he is to carry a staff every day before the grand-duke at dinner, stuffed out with padding, and covered with orders; does not your highness know that?"

"I know nothing of all this; and so tell me in plain German what the case is."

"Well, then," continued Esser; "I suppose you do not know that his highness the prince is to be his excellency the grand-marshal—that unfortunate, but principal officer of state, having received his dismissal yesterday: they are coming up immediately. Not a moment is to be lost: which seems to me very odd. Master Rodolph is arranging every thing; and he has this morning purchased from his master's predecessor, his palace, furniture, wines, and pictures; in short, his whole establishment: the late grand-marshal consoling himself for his loss of office, and revenging himself on his successor, by selling him his property at a hundred per cent. profit. However, Master Rodolph seems quite contented with his bargain; and your luggage is come, sir. His highness, the prince, will be in town at the end of the week; and all the men are to be put in new livery. Mr. Arnelm is to be his highness's chamberlain; and Von Neuwid master of the horse. So you see, sir, you were right; and that old puss in boots was no traitor, after all. Upon my soul, I did not much believe your highness, until I heard all this good news."

CHAPTER II.

ABOUT a week after his arrival at Reisenberg, Vivian was at breakfast, the door opened, and Mr. Sievers entered.

"I did not think that our next meeting would be in this city," said Mr. Sievers, smiling.

His highness, of course, informed me of your al," said Vivian, as he greeted him very cordially.

You, I understand, are the diplomatist whom I thank for finding myself again at Reisenberg.

Let me, at the same time, express my gratitude for your kind offices to me, and congratulate me on the brilliancy of your talents for negotiation.

Little did I think when I was giving you, other day, an account of Mr. Beckendorff, that information would have been of such service to me."

I am afraid you have nothing to thank me for; I certainly, had the office of arranging the relations between the parties devolved on me, my first thoughts would have been for a gentleman for whom I have so much regard and respect as Mr. Sievers."

Sir! I feel honoured: you already speak like a head courtier. Pray, what is to be your office?"

I fear Mr. Beckendorff will not resign in my favour; and my ambition is so exalted, that I cannot descend to take any thing under the pretence."

You are not to be tempted by a grand-marshal!" said Mr. Sievers, with a very peculiar look. I hardly expected, when you were at Turin, to witness such a rapid termination of the existence of our good friend. I think you said have seen him since your arrival: the interview must have been piquant!"

Not at all. I immediately congratulated him on his judicious arrangements which had been concluded; and, to relieve his awkwardness, took some time to myself for having partially assisted in bringing about the result. The subject was not mentioned, and I dare say never will be."

It is a curious business," said Sievers. "The man is a man who, rather than have given me the grand-duke—me, with whom he was not the slightest degree connected, and who, of my accord, sought his hospitality—sooner, I repeat, have delivered me up, he would have had his head razed to the ground, and fifty swords thrust through his heart; and yet, without the slightest compunction, has this same man deserted, with the greatest ease, the party of which, ten days ago, he was a zealous leader. How can you account for this, it is to be, as I have long suspected, that in politics there positively is no feeling of honour? I am conscious that not only himself, but his colleagues and his rivals, are working for their private purpose; and that however a party apparently be assisting in bringing about a measure of common benefit, that nevertheless, and in each is conscious that he is the tool of another. Such an understanding, treason is an expectation; and the only point to consider is, who will be so unfortunate as to be the deserted, in the desertion. It is only fair to his highness to state, that Beckendorff gave him incontrovertible evidence that he had had a private interview with every one of the mediatised princes. They are the dupes of the wily minister. In these negotiations he became acquainted with their plans and characters, and could estimate the probability of their success. The golden bribe, which was in dangled before the eyes of all, had been reserved for the most powerful—our friend Beckendorff, and the consequent desertion of his person, destroy the party forever; while, at the

same time, that party have not even the consolation of a good conscience to uphold them in their adversity; but feel that in case of their clamour, or of any attempt to stir up the people by their hollow patriotism, it is in the power of the minister to expose and crush them forever."

"All this," said Vivian, "makes me the more rejoice that our friend has got out of their clutches: he will make an excellent grand-marshal; and you must not forget, my dear sir, that he did not forget you. To tell you the truth, although I did not flatter myself that I should benefit during my stay at Reisenberg by his influence, I am not the least surprised at the termination of our visit to Mr. Beckendorff. I have seen too many of these affairs, not to have been quite aware the whole time, that it would require very little trouble, and very few sacrifices on the part of Mr. Beckendorff, to quash the whole cabal. By-the-by, our visit to him was highly amusing; he is a most singular man."

"He has had, nevertheless," said Sievers, "a very difficult part to play. Had it not been for you, the prince would have perhaps imagined that he was only being trifled with again, and terminated the interview abruptly and in disgust. Having brought the grand-duke to terms, and having arranged the interview, Beckendorff of course imagined that all was finished. The very day that you arrived at his house, he had received despatches from his royal highness recalling his promise, and revoking Beckendorff's authority to use his unlimited discretion in this business. The difficulty then was to avoid discussion with the prince, with whom he was not prepared to negotiate; and at the same time, without letting his highness out of his sight, to induce the grand-duke to resume his old view of the case. The first night that you were there, Beckendorff rode up to Reisenberg—saw the grand-duke; was refused, through the intrigues of Madame Carolina, the requested authority—and resigned his power. When he was a mile on his return, he was summoned back to the palace; and his royal highness asked, as a favour from his tutor, four-and-twenty hours' consideration. This Beckendorff granted, on the condition that, in case the grand-duke assented to the terms proposed, his royal highness should himself be the bearer of the proposition; and that there should be no more written promises to recall, and no more written authorities to revoke. The terms were hard, but Beckendorff was inflexible. On the second night of your visit, a messenger arrived with a despatch, advising Beckendorff of the intended arrival of his royal highness on the next morning. The ludicrous intrusion of your amusing servant prevented you from being present at the great interview, in which I understand Beckendorff, for the moment, laid aside all his caprices. Our friend acted with great firmness and energy. He would not be satisfied even with the personal pledge and written promise of the grand-duke, but demanded that he should receive the seals of office within a week; so that, had the court not been sincere, his situation with his former party would not have been injured. It is astonishing how very acute even a dull man is, when his own interests are at stake! Had his highness been the agent of another person, he would most probably have committed a thousand blunders,—have made the most disadvantageous terms, or perhaps have been thoroughly duped. Self-interest is the finest eye-water."

"And what says Madame Carolina to all this?"

"O! according to custom, she has changed already, and thinks the whole business most admirably arranged. His highness is her grand favourite, and my little pupil Max, her pet. I think, however, on the whole, the boy is fondest of the grand-duke; whom, if you remember, he was always informing you in confidence, that he intended to assassinate. And as for your obedient servant," said Sievers, bowing, "here am I once more the Aristarchus of her coterie. Her friends, by-the-by, view the accession of the prince with no pleased eyes; and, anticipating that his juncture with the minister is only a prelude to their final dispersion, they are compensating for the approaching termination of their career, by unusual violence and fresh fervour—stinging like mosquitos before a storm, conscious of their impending destruction from the clearance of the atmosphere. As for myself, I have nothing more to do with them. Liberty and philosophy are very fine words; but until I find men are prepared to cultivate them both in a wiser spirit, I shall remain quiet. I have no idea of being banished and imprisoned, because a parcel of knaves are making a vile use of the truths which I disseminate. In my opinion, philosophers have said enough; now let men act. But all this time I have forgotten to ask you how you like Reisenberg."

"I can hardly say: with the exception of yesterday, when I rode Max round the ramparts, I have not been once out of the hotel. But to-day I feel so well, that if you are disposed for a lounge, I should like it above all things."

"I am quite at your service; but I must not forget that I am the bearer of a message to you from his excellency the grand-marshal. He wishes you to join the court-dinner to-day, and be presented—"

"Really, my dear sir, an invalid—"

Well! if you do not like it, you must make your excuses to him; but it really is the pleasantest way of commencing your acquaintance at court, and only allowed to distinguished; among which, as you are the friend of the new grand-marshal, you are of course considered. No one is petted so much as a political apostate, except, perhaps, a religious one; so at present we are all in high feather. You had better dine at the palace to-day. Every thing quite easy; and, by an agreeable relaxation of state, neither swords, bags, nor trains, are necessary. Have you seen the palace? I suppose not; we will look at it, and then call on the prince."

The gentlemen accordingly left the hotel; and proceeding down the principal street of the New Town, they came into a very large square, or Place d'Armes. A couple of regiments of infantry were exercising in it.

"A specimen of our standing army," said Sievers. "In the war time this little state brought thirty thousand highly disciplined and well appointed troops into the field. This efficient contingent was, at the same time, the origin of our national prosperity, and our national debt. For we have a national debt, sir! I assure you we are very proud of it, and consider it the most decided sign of being a great people. Our force in times of peace is, of course, very much reduced. We have, however, still eight thousand men, who are perfectly unnecessary. The most curious thing is,

that, to keep up the patronage of the noble nobility, though we have cut our army two-thirds, we have never reduced the number of our generals: and so, at this among our eight thousand men, we count forty general officers, being one to every three privates. We have, however, which you would not suspect, one military genius of our multitude of heroes. The Count von Speer is worthy of being one of Napoleon's marshals. Who he is, no one exactly knows, but he is an illegitimate son of Beckendorff. It is, that he owes his nobility to his sword; certain it is that he is to be counted among very few who share the minister's confidence. Von Sohnspeer has certainly performed some brilliant exploits; yet, in my opinion, the least splendid day of his life, was that of the 18th of Leipzig. He was on the side of the allies and fought against the allies with desperation. When he saw that all was over, and the triumph of the allies, calling out 'Germany fore!' he dashed against his former friends; and from the flying Gauls a hundred pieces of cannon. He hastened to the tent of the emperor, took his blood-red sword in his hand, and at the same time congratulated them on the triumph of the allies and presented them with his hard-earned sword. The manoeuvre was perfectly successful; the troops of Reisenberg, complimented as they were, were pitied for their former unhappiness, being forced to fight against their fathers; they were immediately enrolled in the allied army; such, they received a due share of all the honours. He is a grand genius, young Master von Speer."

"O, decidedly! Quite worthy of being the companion of the fighting bastards of the middle ages. This is a fine square!"

"Very grand indeed! Precedents for the architectural combinations could be found at Athens or Rome; nevertheless the general effect is magnificent. Do you admire the making every elevation of an order consistent with the purpose of the building? See the portico, on the opposite side of the square palace. The Corinthian order, which is excellent in all its details, suits well the character of the structure. It accords with royal pomp and splendour, with fêtes and banquets, and interior magnificence. On the other hand, what a happy contrast afforded to this gorgeous structure, by the simplicity of this Tuscan Palace of the Grand School of Arts, in the farthest corner of the city. It is properly entered through an Ionic portico, and we go into the palace. Here, not only the monarch reside, but, an arrangement which I admire, here are deposited, in a gallery, the treasures it contains, our very superb collection of pictures. They are the private property of the royal highness; but, as is usually the case with despotic princes, the people, equally his subjects, are flattered by the collection being at the 'Public Gallery.' We have hardly time to look at the pictures to-day; let us enter this hall, the most interesting of which, if not as valuable, are the most interesting—the Hall of Sculpture."

"Germany, as you must be aware, has a fine collection of ancient sculpture. In respect, it is not in a much more deplorable state than, I believe, England is itself; but

ae, with excellent taste, instead of filling a room with uninteresting busts of ancient emperors, or second-rate specimens of antique art, which sometimes to be purchased, has formed a collection of casts from all the celebrated works of antiquity. These casts are of great value, and a rare rarity.

"There," said Mr. Sievers, pointing to the Venus de Medicis, "there is a goddess, whose divinity is acknowledged in all creeds. It is commonly said, that no cast of this statue conveys to the slightest idea of the miraculous original. I deny: the truth is, that the plaster figures which everywhere abound under the title of the Venus de Medicis, are copies five hundred times copied, and of course all resemblance is lost. It could be lost in a great measure, were the original an dancing Faun or a fighting Gladiator. The inevitable increase of difficulty in transferring the delicate traits of female beauty, need not be expanded on. Of this statue the whole of the right arm, a portion of the left, and some other less important parts, are restorations. But who cares for that? Who, in gazing on the Venus, dwells on anything but the body? Here is the magic! Here is to be discovered the reason of the universal love of this work of art! We do not consider the Venus de Medicis as the personification of a painter's dream. Her beauty is not ideal."

Mr. Sievers did not stop here in his criticism on the Venus de Medicis, but fully demonstrated, which has never yet been done, the secret cause of the fame of this statue. His language, though highly philosophical, might, however, be misinterpreted in this precise age; and as this work is chiefly written for the entertainment of families, I have been induced to cut out the most instructive passage in the book.

"And this, of course, is a very fine cast?" asked Vivian.

"Admirable! It was presented by the Grand Duke of Tuscany to his royal highness, and is, of course, from the original. See, now! the Belvedere Apollo; an inferior production, I think, to the Venus—perhaps a copy. Yet, in that dilated nose, that indignant lip, and that revengeful brow, recognise the indomitable Pythius; or, rather, Thaps, the persecutor of the miserable Niobe. The director of the gallery has made, with great crimination, the unhappy rival of Latona the object to which the god of the silver bow points his mangled arm. The Niobe is a splendid production. Some complain of her apparent indifference to the fate of her offspring. But is not this in character? To me, the figure appears faultless. Even as I now gaze on her, the mother and the child are still struggling; and, rooted to the ground by her overwhelming affliction, she seems weeping herself into a statue. I have often thought that the hidden meaning lurked under the dark legend of Niobe. Probably she and her family were the victims of priestcraft. Come, my dear fellow, protestants, let us, though late, pay our tribute of respect to the first heretic." Here Mr. Sievers bowed with great solemnity before the statue.

"I will now show you," resumed Mr. Sievers, "our works of art, which, if not altogether as exquisite as those we have examined, nevertheless, for various reasons, deserve our attention. And let us begin before this dying man. This statue is generally known by the title of the Dying Gladiator.

According to Winkelman, he is a dying herald: either Polifontes, herald of Laius, killed by Oedipus; or Cephæus, herald of Eurithæus, killed by the Athenians; or Anthemocritus, herald of the Athenians, killed by the Megarenses; or, in short, any other herald who ever happened to be killed. According to another antiquary, he is a Spartan shield-bearer; and according to a third, a barbarian. What an imagination it requires to be a great antiquary!" said Mr. Sievers, shrugging his shoulders.

"I think this statue is also supposed to be a copy," said Vivian.

"It is; and the right arm is altogether by Michel Angelo, the ablest restorer that ever existed. He was deeply imbued with the spirit of antiquity, though himself incapable of finishing a single work. Had he devoted himself to restoration, it had been better for posterity.

"This," continued Mr. Sievers, pointing to a kneeling figure, "is a most celebrated work; and one of which you have doubtless heard. It generally is known by the name of the Knife-grinder; though able judges have not yet decided whether it be a representation of that humble artisan, or of the slayer of Marsyas, or the barber of Julius Cæsar. I never can sufficiently admire these classical antiquaries! They are determined to be right: see, for instance, that heroic figure! The original is in the Louvre, and described in the catalogue of the French savans as a statue of 'Jason, otherwise Cincinnatus.' What a pity that it did not occur to Plutarch to write a parallel between two characters in which there is, in every respect, such a striking similarity!"

"What are these horses?" said Vivian. "They surely are not the Elgin?"

"O, no!" said Mr. Sievers; "as an Englishman, you should know better. These are casts of the Elgin marbles presented to his royal highness by the King of England. The exquisite tact, and wise liberality with which your accomplished monarch has disseminated sets of these casts among the principal galleries of Europe, has made the Continent at length believe that it is no longer high treason in your country to admire a picture or a statue. The horses which you have remarked are, I assure you, very celebrated beasts; although, for my part, I confess that their beauty is not to me very evident. Either the ancients had no conception how to mould a horse, or their breeds were poor. These are casts from the famous brazen steeds of Venice, in front of the church of St. Mark's. They were given by the Emperor of Austria. That the originals are antique, there is no doubt: I will not trouble you with my opinion as to their nation. Learn, however, from far deeper scholars than myself, that they are either Roman or Grecian—either Roman of the reign of Nero, or Grecian of the isle of Chios, or of the work of Lysippus. All these opinions are developed and supported by ponderous dissertations in quarto; and scarcely a year escapes without these brazen beasts giving rise to some controversy or other. O! these antiquaries! Count Cicognara, the President of the Venetian Academy, has lately summed up the merits of the long agitated question, and given it as his opinion, that to come to a final and satisfactory result, we must search and compare all the horses, of all the cabinets of all Europe. What sublime advice about nothing! O! I am tired of

these fellows. In my opinion, this little Cupid of Dennecker is worth all St. Mark's together. It is worthy of being placed by the Venus. When you were at Frankfort, you saw his Ariadne?"

"Yes! at Bethmann's, and a delightful work it is. Ease and grace are produced by an original but most involved attitude, and that is the triumph of art."

The hour of court-dinner at Reisenberg was two o'clock; about which time, in England, a St. James's man first remembers the fatal necessity of shaving; though, by-the-by, this allusion is not a happy one, for in this country shaving is a ceremony at present somewhat obsolete. Were the celebrated Packwood now living, he would have as much chance of making a fortune by the sale of his instruments in this refined city, as at a settlement of blue baboons. At two o'clock, however, our hero, accompanying the grand-marshal, and Mr. Sievers, reached the palace. In the saloon were assembled various guests, chiefly attached to the court. Immediately after the arrival of our party, the grand-duke and Madame Carolina, followed by their chamberlains and ladies in waiting, entered. The little Prince Maximilian strutted in between his royal highness and his fair consort, having hold of a hand of each. The urchin was very much changed in appearance since Vivian first saw him; he was dressed in the complete uniform of a captain of Royal Guards; having been presented with a commission on the day of his arrival at court. A brilliant star glittered on his scarlet coat, and paled the splendour of his golden epaulets. The duties, however, of the princely captain were at present confined to the pleasing exertion of carrying the bon-bon box of Madame Carolina, the contents of which were chiefly reserved for his own gratification. In the grand-duke, Vivian was not surprised to recognise the horseman whom he had met in the private road on the morning of his departure from Mr. Beckendorff's; his conversation with Sievers had prepared him for this. Madame Carolina was in appearance Parisian of the highest order. I am not in a humour for a laboured description, at which, very probably, few will grieve. The phrase I have used will enable the judicious reader to conceive all that is necessary. "Parisian of the highest order,"—that is to say, an exquisite figure and an indescribable tournure, an invisible foot, a countenance full of esprit and intelligence, without a single regular feature, and large and very bright black eyes. Madame's hair was of the same colour, and arranged in the most effective manner. Her cachemere would have graced the Feast of Roses, and so engrossed your attention, that it was long before you observed the rest of her costume, in which, however, traces of a creative genius were immediately visible: in short, Madame Carolina was not fashionable, but fashion herself. In a subsequent chapter, at a ball which I have in preparation, I will make up for this brief notice of her costume, by publishing her court-dress. For the sake of my fair readers, however, I will not pass over the ornament in her hair. The comb which supported her elaborate curls was invisible, except at each end, whence it threw out a large Psyche's wing of the finest golden web, the eyes of which were formed of precious garnets encircled with turquoises. Let Mr. Hamlet immediately introduce this ornament, and make his fortune by the "Carolina Comb."

The royal party made a progress round the circle,

to which the late lamented Mr. Nichols could do more justice than myself. Madame first presented her delicate and faintly rouge to the hump-backed crown prince, who did his eyes from the ground as he performed his customary courtesy. One or two royal who were on a visit at the palace, were honoured with the same compliment. The grand-duke bore the most gracious and graceful manner to the individual; and his lady accompanied the speech, which was at the same time perspicuous. The first great duty of a monarch is to know how to bow skilfully! nothing is more important. A monarch may often quell a rebellion, and sometimes a conspiracy. It should, at the same time, be general and individual; equally addressed to the company assembled, and to every single person in the assembly. Our own king bows to the people. His bow is eloquent, and will always render any oration on his part perfectly unnecessary; a great point, for harangues are not regal. It is more undignified than to make a speech from the first an acknowledgment that you are in the necessity of explaining, or conciliating, or convincing, or confuting; in short, that you are omnipotent, but opposed. Every charlatan orator, and almost every orator a charlatan, never knew a quack or an adventurer who could bow well. It requires a dignity which can result from a consciousness of high breeding and high moral character. The last cause, however, will never inspire the charlatan; and for this reason never met a scoundrel, however exalted in position, who in his manners was a perfect gentleman. He is either ridiculously stiff, and arrogant, or his base countenance is even an insidious, cunning, conciliatory smile, either intended to take you in, or, if it seems to imply, "What a confounded clever fellow I am; how I understand human nature; how I adapt myself to the humours of the world; how I sneak with a smile into their hearts!" Miserable knaves! these fellows are intolerant and tyrannical to their inferiors, and pass their mornings in cringing to a minister, then go home and bully their butler.

The bow of the Grand-duke of Reisenberg was a first-rate bow, and always produced a great sensation with the people, particularly if it was followed up by a proclamation for a public fire-works; then his royal highness's bow was at its height. But Madame Carolina, having by a few magic sentences pervaded the whole room that she took a peculiar interest in the happiness of every individual present, had Vivian, who stood next to his friend the marshal. He was presented by that grade and received most graciously. For a moment he thought that his royal highness was going to speak; but he only smiled. Madame, however, said a great deal; and stood not more than five minutes, complimenting the English and particularly the specimen of that people who now had the honour of being to her. No one spoke more in a given time than Madame Carolina; and as, while the words fell from her deep red lips, her eyes were invariably fixed on those of the person addressed, what she did say, was invariably very effective. Vivian had only time to

cognition to his friend Max, for the company, in-arm, now formed into a procession to the grand saloon. Vivian was parted from the grand-marshal, who, as the highest officer of state present, followed immediately after the grand-duke. Our hero's companion was Mr. Sievers. Although it was not a state dinner, the party, from being followed by the suites of the royal visitors, was numerous; and as the court occupied the centre of the table, Vivian was too distant to listen to the conversation of madame, who, however, he well received, from the animation of her countenance and the eloquent energy of her action, was delighted and delighting. The grand-duke spoke little; but needed, like a lover of three days, to the accents of his accomplished consort. The arrangement of a German dinner promotes conversation. The serious dishes are at once placed upon the table; when the curious eye has well examined their contents, the whole dinner, untouched, disappears. Though this circumstance is rather alarming to a king, his terror soon gives place to self-congratulation, when he finds the banquet re-appear, each completely carved and cut up. A bottle of wine being placed, to each guest, your only need is, at the same time, to refresh both your body and your mind, by gratifying your palate and conversing with your neighbour. Would that this were adopted in our own country!

And now, having placed them at dinner, I will, once in my life, allow the meal to pass over without reporting the conversation; for I have a duty in the evening which must not be slurred; and if my characters may not sometimes be so, I fear the plot, which all this time is gradually developing, will stand a chance of being neglected. Therefore imagine the dinner over. Not being Sunday," said Mr. Sievers, "there is no opera to-night. We are to meet again, I believe, at the palace, in a few hours, at Madame de Salingen's soirée. In the mean time, you had better accompany his excellency to the public gardens; that is the fashionable drive. I shall go and smoke a pipe."

Let us pass over the drive without a description by which it should be described! The circle of the English Gardens of Reichenberg exhibited exactly, although upon a smaller scale, the same fashions and same frivolities, the same characters and the same affectations, as the Hyde Park of London, or the Champs Elysées of Paris, the Prater of Vienna, the Corso of Rome or Milan, or the Cascine of Florence. There was the female leader of fashion, followed by her own sex, and adored by the other, and followed by both—ruling both by the same principle of emulation, and by the influence of the same quality which creates the arbitress of fashion in all countries—the courage to break through the conventional restraints of an artificial class, and by talents to enable all those who dare follow her innovating example—attracting universal notice by her own singularity, and at the same time conciliating the sort of those from whom she dares to differ, by employing her influence in preventing others from imitating their laws. The arbitress of fashion is who is allowed to be singular, in order that she may suppress singularity; she is exempted from laws; but, by receiving the dictatorship, she exercises the despotism. Then there was that mysterious being, whose influence is perhaps even more surprising than the dominion of the female

despot of manners, for she wields a power which can be analyzed and comprehended,—I mean the male authority in coats, cravats, and chargers; who, without fortune and without rank, and sometimes merely through the bold obtrusion of a fantastic taste, becomes the glass of fashion, in which even royal dukes and the most aristocratic nobles hasten to adjust themselves; and the mould by which the ingenious youth of a whole nation is enthusiastically formed. There is a Brummell in every country.

Vivian, who, after a round or two with the grand-marshal, had mounted Max, was presented by the young Count von Bernstorff, the son of the grand-chamberlain, to whose care he had been specially commended by the prince, to the lovely Countess von S—. The examination of this high authority was rigid, and her report satisfactory. When Vivian quitted the side of her brithchaka, half a dozen dandies immediately rode up to learn the result; and, on being informed, they simultaneously cantered on to young Von Bernstorff, and requested to have the honour of being introduced to his highly interesting friend. All these exquisites wore white hats lined with crimson, in consequence of the head of the all-influential Emilius von Aslingin having, on the preceding day, been kept sacred from the profaning air by that most tasteful covering. The young lords were loud in their commendations of this latest evidence of Von Aslingin's happy genius, and rallied, with a most unmerciful spirit, the unfortunate Von Bernstorff for not having yet mounted the all-perfect *chapeau*. Like all Von Aslingin's introductions, it was as remarkable for good taste as for striking singularity: they had no doubt it would have a great run; exactly the style of thing for a hot autumn; and it suited so admirably with the claret-coloured riding-coat, which madame considered Von Aslingin's *chef-d'œuvre*. Inimitable Von Aslingin! As they were in these raptures, to Vivian's great delight, and to their great dismay, the object of their admiration appeared. Our hero was of course anxious to see so interesting a character; but he could scarcely believe that he, in fact, beheld the ingenious introducer of white and crimson hats, and the still happier inventor of those *chef-d'œuvres*, claret-coloured riding-coats, when his attention was directed to a horseman who wore a peculiarly high, heavy black hat, and a frogged and furred frock, buttoned up, although it was a most sultry day, to his very nose. How singular is the slavery of fashion! Notwithstanding their mortification, the unexpected costume of Von Aslingin appeared only to increase the young lords' admiration of his character and accomplishments, and instead of feeling that he was an insolent pretender, whose fame originated in his insulting their tastes, and existed only by their sufferance, all cantered away with the determination of wearing on the next day, even if it were to cost them each a calenture, furs enough to keep a man warm during a winter party at St. Petersburg,—not that winter parties ever take place there; on the contrary, before the winter sets in, the court moves on to Moscow; which, from its situation and its climate, will always, in fact, continue the real capital of Russia.

The royal carriage, drawn by six horses and backed by three men-servants, who would not have disgraced the fairy equipage of Cinderella, has now left the gardens.

CHAPTER III.

MADAME CAROLINA held her soirée in her own private apartments; the grand-duke himself appearing in the capacity of a visitor. The company was very numerous and very brilliant. His royal highness, surrounded by a select circle, dignified one corner of the saloon: Madame Carolina at the other end of the room, in the midst of poets, philosophers, and politicians, in turn decided upon the most interesting and important topics of poetry, philosophy, and politics. Boston, and zwicken, and whist, interested some; and puzzles, and other ingenious games, others. A few were above conversing, or gambling, or guessing; superior intelligences, who would be neither interested nor amused;—among these, Emilius von Aslingens was the most prominent; he leaned against a door, in full uniform, with his vacant eyes fixed on no object. The others were only awkward copies of an easy original; and among these, stiff or stretching, lounging on a *chaise-longue*, or posted against the wall, Vivian's quick eye recognised more than one of the unhappy votaries of white hats lined with crimson.

When Vivian made his bow to the grand-duke, he was surprised by his royal highness coming forward a few steps from the surrounding circle, and extending to him his hand. His royal highness continued conversing with him for upwards of a quarter of an hour; expressed the great pleasure he felt at seeing at his court a gentleman of whose abilities he had the highest opinion; and after a variety of agreeable compliments—compliments are doubly agreeable from crowned heads—the grand-duke retired to a game of Boston with his royal visitors. Vivian's reception made a great sensation through the room. Various rumours were immediately afloat.

"Who can he be?"

"Don't you know?—O! most curious story! killed a boar as big as a bonassus, which was ravaging half Reisenberg, and saved the lives of his excellency the grand-marshal and his whole suite."

"What is that about the grand-marshal, and a boar as big as a bonassus? Quite wrong—natural son of Beckendorff—know it for a fact—don't you see he is being introduced to Von Sohnspeer?—brothers, you know—managed the whole business about the leagued princes—not a son of Beckendorff, only a particular friend—the son of the late General —, I forget his name exactly—killed at Leipsic, you know—that famous general, what was his name?—that very famous general—don't you know? Never mind—well! he is his son—father particular friend of Beckendorff—college friend—brought up the orphan—very handsome of him!—they say he does handsome things sometimes."

"Ah! well—I've heard so too—and so this young man is to be the new under-secretary! very much approved by the Countess of S—."

"No, it can't be!—your story is quite wrong. He is an Englishman."

"An Englishman! no!"

"Yes, he is. I had it from madame—high rank incog.—going to Vienna—secret mission."

"Something to do with Greece! of course independence recognised!"

"O! certainly—pay a tribute to the Porte, and governed by a hospodar. Admirable arrangement!"

have to support their own government and foreign one besides!"

It was with great pleasure that Vivian at length observed Mr. Sievers enter the room, and extricating himself from the enlightened and enthusiastic crowd, who were disserting round the tribunal, madame, he hastened to his amusing friend.

"Ah! my dear sir, how glad I am to see you I have, since we met last, been introduced to you fashionable ruler, and some of her most fashionable slaves. I have been honoured by a long conversation with his royal highness, and have listened some of the most eloquent of the Carolina coterie. What a Babel! there all are, at the same time talkers and listeners. To what a pitch of perfection may the 'science' of conversation be carried. My mind teems with original ideas to which I can annex no definite meaning. What a variety of contradictory theories, which are all apparently sound! I begin to suspect that there is a great difference between reasoning and reason!"

"Your suspicion is well founded, my dear sir," said Mr. Sievers; "and I know no circumstance which would sooner prove it, than listening for a few minutes to this little man in a snuff-coloured coat, near me. But I will save you from so terrible a demonstration. He has been endeavouring to catch my eye these last ten minutes, and I have as studiously avoided seeing him. Let us move."

"Willingly: who may this fear-inspiring master be?"

"A philosopher," said Mr. Sievers, "as most of us call ourselves here: that is to say, his profession is to observe the course of nature; and if by chance he can discover any slight deviation of the good dame from the path which our ignorance has marked out as her only track, he claps his hands, cries *supra*! and is dubbed 'illustrious' on the spot. Such is the world's reward for a great discovery, which generally in a twelve-month's time is found out to be a blunder of the philosopher, and not an eccentricity of nature. I am not underrating those great men who, by deep study, or rather by some mysterious inspiration, have produced combinations, and effected results, which have materially assisted the progress of civilization and the security of our happiness. No, no! is them be due adoration. Would that the reverence of posterity could be some consolation to these great spirits, for neglect and persecution when they lived! I have invariably observed of great natural philosophers, that if they lived in former ages they were persecuted as magicians, and in periods which profess to be more enlightened, they have always been ridiculed as quacks. The succeeding century the real quack arises. He adopts and develops the suppressed, and despised, and forgotten discovery of his unfortunate predecessor; and then trumpets this resurrection-man of science with a loud blast of rapture, as if, instead of being merely the accidental animator of the corpse, he were the cunning artist himself, who had devised and executed the miraculous machinery which the other had only wound up."

"Let us sit down on this sofa. I think we have escaped from your brown-coated friend."

"Ay! I forgot we were speaking of him. He is, as the phrase goes, a philosopher. To think that a student of butterflies and beetles, a nice server of the amorous passions of an ant, or the caprices of a cockchafer, should bear a title!"

consecrated to those lights of nature who taught us to be wise, and free, and eloquent. Philosophy! am sick of the word."

"And this is an entomologist, I suppose?"

"Not exactly. He is about to publish a quarto on the Villa Pliniana on the Lake of Como. Sir Philosopher, forsooth! has been watching for these eight months the intermittent fountain there; but though his attention was quite unlike his subject, a 'discovery' has taken place. Pity that a freak of nature should waste eight months of a philosopher's life! Though annoyed by his failure, my learned gentleman is consoled by what he styles, an approximation to a theory; and solves the phenomenon by a whisper of the evening winds."

"But in this country," said Vivian, "surely you have no reason to complain of the want of moral philosophers, or the respect paid to them. The country of Kant—of—"

"Yes, yes! we have plenty of metaphysicians, you mean them. Watch that lively-looking gentleman, who is stuffing *kalte schale* so voraciously in the corner. The leader of the idealists—a pupil of the celebrated Fichte! To gain an idea of his character, know that he out-herods his master; and Fichte is to Kant, what Kant is to the unenlightened vulgar. You can now form a right conception of the spiritual nature of our friend who is stuffing *kalte schale*. The first principle of his school is to reject all expressions which incline in the slightest degree to substantiality. *Existence* is, in his opinion, a word too absolute. *Being, principle, essence*, are terms scarcely sufficiently ethereal, even to indicate the abstruse shadows of his opinions. Some say that he reads the contact of all real things, and that he makes it the study of his life to avoid them. Matter is his great enemy. When you converse with him, you lose all consciousness of this world. My dear sir," continued Mr. Sievers, "observe how exquisitely nature revenges herself upon these capricious and fantastic children. Believe me, nature is the most brilliant of wits; and that no repartees that were ever inspired by hate, or wine, or beauty, ever equalled the calm effects of her indomitable power upon those who are rejecting her authority. Do you understand me! Methinks that the best answer to the idealism of Mr. Fichte is to see his pupil devouring *kalte schale*!"

"And this is really one of your great lights?"

"Verily! his works are the most famous, and the most unreadable, in all Germany. Surely you have heard of his 'Treatise on Man?' A treatise on a subject in which every one is interested, written in a style which no one can understand."

"I could point you out," continued Mr. Sievers, "another species of idealist more ridiculous even than this. Schelling has revived pantheism in Germany. According to him, our death our identity is lost forever, but our internal qualities become part of the great whole. I could show you also, to prove my impartiality, materialists more ridiculous than both these. But I will not weary you. You asked me, however, if, in Germany, we had not philosophers. I have pointed them out to you. My dear sir, as I told you before, philosophy is a term which it is the fashion for every one to assume. We have a fellow at Reisenberg who always writes 'On the Philosophy' of something. He has just published a volume 'On the Philosophy of Pipe-heads!' We have even come

to this! But considering the term *philosophy* as I do myself, and as I have reason to believe you do, I am not rash when I say, that in Germany she has no real votaries. All here are imitating to excess the only part of the ancient philosophy, which is as despicable as it is useless. The ever inexplicable enigma of the universe is what the modern Germans profess to solve; the ring which they ever strive to carry off in their intellectual tilts. In no nation sooner than in Germany, can you gain more detailed information about every other world except the present. Here, we take nothing for granted; an excellent preventive of superficialness; but as our premises can never be settled, it unfortunately happens that our river of knowledge, though very profound, is extremely narrow. While we are all anticipating immortality, we forget that we are mortal. Believe me, that the foundations of true philosophy are admissions. We must take something for granted. In morals, as well as in algebra, we must form our calculations by the assistance of unknown numbers. Whatever doubts may exist as to the causes of our being, or the origin of our passions, no doubt can exist respecting their results. It is those results that we must regulate, and it is them that we should study. For the course of the river, which is visible to all, may be cleared or changed; but the unknown and secret fountain—what profits it to ponder on its origin, or even to discover its site, or to plumb its unfathomable and mysterious waters? When I find a man, instead of meditating on the nature of our essence and the principle of our spirit,—on which points no two persons ever agreed—developing and directing the energies of that essence and that spirit, energies which all feel and all acknowledge; when I find a man, instead of musing over the absolute principle of the universe, forming a code of moral principles by which this single planet may be regulated and harmonised; when I find him, instead of pouring forth obscure oracles on the reunion of an inexplicable soul with an unintelligible nature, demonstrating the indissoluble connexion of private happiness and public weal, and detailing the modes by which the interests of the indispensable classes of necessary society may at the same time be considered and confirmed, I recognise in this man the true philosopher; I distinguish him from the dreamers who arrogate that title; and if he be my countryman, I congratulate Germany on her illustrious son."

"You think, then," said Vivian, "that posterity will rank the German metaphysicians with the latter Platonists?"

"I hardly know—they are a body of men not less acute, but I doubt whether they will be as celebrated. In this age of print, notoriety is more attainable than in the age of manuscript; but lasting fame certainly is not. That tall thin man in black, that just bowed to me, is the editor of one of our great *Reisenberg* reviews. The journal he edits is one of the most successful periodical publications ever set afloat. Among its contributors may assuredly be classed many men of eminent talents; yet to their abilities the surprising success and influence of this work is scarcely to be ascribed: it is the result rather of the consistent spirit which has always inspired its masterly critiques. One principle has ever regulated its management: it is a simple rule, but an effective one—every author is reviewed by his personal enemy. You may ima-

gine the point of the critique; but you would hardly credit, if I were to inform you, the circulation of the review. You will tell me that you are not surprised, and talk of the natural appetite of our species for malice and slander. Be not too quick. The rival of this review, both in influence and in sale, is conducted on as simple a principle, but not a similar one. In this journal every author is reviewed by his personal friend—of course, perfect panegyric. Each number is flattering as a lover's tale,—every article an eulogy. What say you to this? These are the influential literary and political journals of Reisenberg. There was yet another; it was edited by an eloquent scholar; all its contributors were, at the same time, brilliant and profound. It numbered among its writers some of the most celebrated names in Germany; its critiques and articles were as impartial as they were able—*as sincere as they were sound*; it never paid the expense of the first number. As philanthropists and admirers of our species, my dear sir, these are gratifying results; they satisfactorily demonstrate, that mankind have no innate desire for scandal, calumny, and backbiting; it only proves that they have an innate desire to be gulled and deceived.

"The editor of the first review," continued Mr. Sievers, "is a very celebrated character here. He calls himself a philosophical historian. Professing the greatest admiration of Montesquieu, this luminous gentleman has, in his 'History of Society in all Nations and all Ages,' produced one of the most ludicrous caricatures of the 'Esprit des Loix,' that can be possibly imagined. The first principle of these philosophical historians is to *generalize*. According to them, men, in every nation and in every clime, is the same animal. His conduct is influenced by general laws, and no important change ever takes place in his condition through the agency of accidental circumstances, or individual exertion. All, necessarily, arises by a uniform and natural process, which can neither be effectually resisted, nor prematurely accelerated. From these premises our philosophical historian has deduced a most ingenious and agreeable delineation of the progress of society from barbarism to refinement. With this writer, recorded truth has no charms, and facts have no value. They are the consequence of his theory; and it is therefore easier for him, at once, to imagine his details, than to give himself the trouble of collecting them from dusty chronicles, or original manuscripts. With these generalizers, man is a machine. Accident and individual character, the two most powerful springs of revolution, are not allowed to influence their theoretic calculations; and setting out, as they all do, with an avowed opinion of what man ought to be, they have no difficulty in providing what, in certain situations, he has been, and what, in singular situations, he ever must be."

"We have no want of these gentry in my country," said Vivian; "although of late years this mode of writing history has become rather unfashionable. The English are naturally great lovers of detail. They like a Gerard Dow better than a Poussin; and in literature, in spite of their philosophical historians, their old chronicles are not yet *obsolete*. Of late, indeed, even the common people have exhibited a taste for this species of antique literature."

"The genius and delightful works of the Che-

valier Scott, (the Germans always use titles, and speaking even of their most illustrious men, never omit their due style,—as 'the Baron von Göthe,' the 'Baron von Leibnitz,') of the Chevalier Scott," continued Mr. Sievers, "has in a great measure revived this taste. You are of course aware that he has influenced the literatures of the Continent scarcely less than that of his own country: he is the favourite author of the French, and in Germany we are fast losing our hobgoblin taste. When I first came to Reisenberg, now eight years ago, the popular writer of fiction was a man, the most probable of whose numerous romances was one in which the hero sold his shadow to a demon, over the dice-box; then married an unknown woman in a church-yard; afterwards wedded a river nymph; and having committed bigamy, finally stabbed himself, to enable his first wife to marry his own father. He and his works are quite obsolete; and the star of his genius, with those of many others, has paled before the superior brilliancy of that literary comet, Mr. von Chronicle, our great historical novelist. Von Chronicle is one of those writers who *never* would have existed had it not been for the Chevalier Scott: he is a wonderful copyist of that part of your countrymen's works which is easy to copy, but without a spark of his genius. According to Von Chronicle, we have all, for a long time, been under a mistake, and your great author among us. We have ever considered that the first point to be studied in novel writing, is *character*: miserable error! It is *costume*. Variety of incident, novelty, and nice discrimination of character; interest of story, and all those points which we have hitherto looked upon as necessary qualities of a fine novel; vanish before the superior attractions of variety of dresses, exquisite descriptions of the cloak of a signor, or the trunk-hose of a serving-man.

"Amuse yourself while you are at Reisenberg, by turning over some volumes which every one is reading; Von Chronicle's last great historical novel. The subject is a magnificent one—Rienzi—yet it is strange that the hero only appears in the first and the last scenes. You look astonished. Ah! I see you are not a great historical novelist. You forget the effect which is produced by the contrast of the costume of Master Nicholas, the notary in the quarter of the Jews, and that of Rienzi, the tribune, in his robe of purple, at his coronation in the capitol. Conceive the effect, the contrast. With that coronation, Von Chronicle's novel terminates: for, as he well observes, after that, what is there in the career of Rienzi which would afford matter for the novelist? Nothing! All that afterwards occurs is a mere contest of passions, and a development of character; but where is a procession, a triumph, or a marriage?

"One of Von Chronicle's great characters in this novel is a cardinal. It was only last night that I was fortunate enough to have the beauties of the work pointed out to me by the author himself. He entreated, and gained my permission, to read to me what he himself considered 'the great scene'; I settled myself in my chair, took out my handkerchief, and prepared my mind for the worst. While I was anticipating the terrors of a heroine, he introduced me to his cardinal. Thirty pages were devoted to the description of the prelate's costume. Although clothed in purple, still, by a skilful adjustment of the drapery, Von Chronicle managed to bring in six other petticoats. I thought this began."

d never finish, but to my surprise, when he got to the seventh petticoat, he shut his book, leaning over the table, asked me what I thought of 'great scene?' 'My friend,' said I, 'you are only the greatest historical novelist that ever lived, but that ever will live.'"

"I shall certainly get Rienzi," said Vivian; "it is to me to be an original work."

Von Chronicle tells me that he looks upon it as a master-piece, and that it may be considered the highest point of perfection to which his system of novel-writing can be carried. Not a single page is given in the work, down even to the rabble, which he has not contemporary authority; but he is particularly proud of, are his oaths. Living, he tells me, has cost him more trouble in the management of the swearing; and the Germans, you know, are a most profane nation. The difficulty to be avoided, was using the ejaculations of two different ages. The 'shblood' of the eighteenth century must not be confounded with the 'shblood' of the seventeenth. Enough of Von Chronicle! The most amusing thing," continued Sievers, "is to contrast this mode of writing with the mode of writing works of history. Contrast the 'style' of Von Chronicle, with the 'Haroun Al Raschid' of Madame Carolina. Here we write like history, and history like novels: all our facts are fancy, and all our imagination reality." Saying, Mr. Sievers rose, and wishing Vivian good night, quitted the room. He was one of those great geniuses who always leave off with a bang.

Mr. Sievers had not left Vivian more than a minute, when the little Prince Maximilian came up and bowed to him in a very condescending manner. Our hero, who had not yet had an opportunity of talking with him, thanked him cordially for his presence, and asked him how he liked the visit.

"O, delightful! I pass all my time with the Duke and madame;" and here the young duke settled his military stock, and arranged the blade of his sword. "Madame Carolina," continued he, "has commanded me to inform you that she desires the pleasure of your attendance."

The summons was immediately obeyed, and Vivian had the honour of a very long conversation with the interesting consort of the grand-duke. He was for a considerable time, complimented by her enthusiastic panegyric of England; her originality of the character and genius of Lord Byron; her veneration for Sir Humphrey Davy, and her admiration of Sir Walter Scott. Not remiss was he in paying, in his happiest manner, due compliments to the fair and royal authoress of the *History of Charlemagne*. While she spoke his native language, he admired her accurate English; and as she professed to have derived her imperfect knowledge of his perfect language from a study of great authors, she avowed her belief of the impossibility of ever speaking it correctly, without the assistance of a native. Conversation became more interesting. Madame Carolina lamented Vivian's position, and fearing that he had not been properly attended, she insisted upon his seeing the physician. It was in vain he protested that he was quite well. She, convinced by his looks, insisted upon sending Dr. von Spittergen to him the next morning.

When Vivian left the palace, he was not unmindful of an engagement to return there the next day, to give a first lesson in English pronunciation to Madame Carolina.

CHAPTER IV.

ON the morning after the court dinner, as Vivian was amusing himself over Von Chronicle's last new novel, Esser George announced Dr. von Spittergen. Our hero was rather annoyed at the kind interest which Madame Carolina evidently took in his convalescence. He was by no means in the humour to endure the affectations and perfumes of that most finical of prigs, a court physician; but so important a personage could scarcely be refused admission, and accordingly Dr. von Spittergen entered the room. He was a very tall, and immensely stout man, with a small head, short neck, and high shoulders. His little quick gray eye saved his countenance from the expression of sullen dullness, which otherwise would have been given to it by his very thick lips. His dress was singular, and was even more striking from the great contrast which it afforded to the costume which Vivian had anticipated. There was no sword, no wig, no lace ruffles, no diamond ring. The tail of his dark mixture coat nearly reached the ground; its waist encircled his groin, and the lappets of his waistcoat fell over his thighs. He wore very square-toed shoes, and large silver buckles, and partridge-coloured woollen stockings were drawn over the knees of his black pantaloons. Holding in one hand his large straw hat, and in the other a gold-headed cane as big as Goliath's spear, without any preliminary, he thus addressed, in a loud voice, his new patient:—

"Well, sir! what is the matter with you?"

"Pray be seated, doctor. The honour of this visit—very sensible—"

"Never sit down."

As Vivian, rather confounded by the unexpected appearance and manners of his visitor, did not immediately answer, Dr. von Spittergen again spoke.

"Well, sir! have you got any thing to say to me?"

"Really, doctor, you are so very kind! unnecessarily so.—I am not quite well—that is, not exactly quite well; perhaps a little cold—nothing more."

"Little cold, indeed! Why, what would you have, young man?—the plague?"

"Dr. von Spittergen," thought Vivian, "is evidently one of those mild practitioners, who are of opinion, that Learning is never so lovely as when Brutality is her handmaid; and that Skill is never so respected, as when she not only cures but disgusts you."

"Ah!" continued the doctor; "I suppose you got this cold by forgetting to wear your gloves one day. Gloves are the origin of every disease. Nobody can expect to be well, who ever covers the palm of his hand."

"Well, doctor, I confess I do not ascribe my present indisposition to encouraging the glove manufactory of Reisenberg."

"Fish! what should you know about it, sir?"

"O! nothing. Do not be alarmed that I am about to destroy a favourite theory."

"Pish! young men have always something to say; never to the purpose. Show your teeth, sir! I don't want to see your tongue: show your teeth—all pulled out at five years old!—suppose you know nothing about it: well! if they were not, there is no chance for you;—you will be an invalid all your life."

"Well, doctor!" said Vivian, with imperturbable good humour; "however crazy may be my body, I still trust, with your good assistance, to reach a very advanced period."

"You do, do you? I don't think you will; there's nothing of you; no stamina:—see what can be done, though." Here the good doctor rang the bell.

"Kelter! go and ask your master for his list of medicines."

"Sir!" said the astonished waiter at the Grand Hotel of the Four Nations—"Sir!"

"What, are you deaf!—Go, and bring the list directly."

"I don't know what you mean, sir."

"How long have you lived here?"

"Three days, sir."

"Pish!—go, and tell your master what I said."

The waiter accordingly departed; and the master of the house, bowing and smiling, soon appeared in his own person.

"I beg your pardon, doctor," said he; "but it was a new hand who answered your bell;" and so saying, the good gentleman delivered to Dr. von Spittergen the carte des vins.

"Stop here a moment, my friend!" said Von Spittergen, "while I prescribe for this young man." He began reading—"Vins de Bourgogne—pish! Clos de Vougeot—Mousseux—Chambertin—St. George—Richebourg—pish! vins de Bordeaux—Lafitte—Margaux—Hautbrion—Leoville—Médoc—Sauterne—Barsac—Pregnac—Grave—pish! pish! pish!—Côtes du Rhône—paille—rouge—grillé—St. Peray—pish! pish! pish!—Champagne—p-i-s-h!—Vins du Rhine—drank too much of them already—Porto-Porto—Ah! that will do—Give him a pint at two—Let him dine at that hour, en particulier—and not at the table d'hôte—Give him a pint, I say, with his dinner, and repeat the dose before he goes to bed. Young man, I have done for you all that human skill can—I have given you a very powerful medicine, but all medicine is trash—Are you a horse-man!—you are! very well! I will send my daughter to you—good morning!"

Vivian duly kept his appointment with Madame Carolina. The chamberlain ushered him into a library, where Madame Carolina was seated at a large table covered with books and manuscripts. Her costume and her countenance were equally engaging. Fascination was alike in her smile and her saash—her bow and her buckle. What a delightful pupil to perfect in English pronunciation! Madame pointed, with a pride pleasing to Vivian's feelings as an Englishman, to her shelves, graced with the most eminent of English writers. Madame Carolina was not like one of those admirers of English literature which you often meet on the Continent: people who think that Beattie's *Minstrel* is our most modern and fashionable poem; that the *Night Thoughts* are the masterpiece of our literature; and that Richardson is our only

novelist. O, no!—Madame Carolina, we have disgraced May Fair. She knew Harold by rote, and had even peeped in Juan. Her admiration of the *Edinburgh Quarterly Reviews*, was great and similar Continental liberal, indeed, even the tory *Quarterly* is philosophy; and not an untary ever yet massacred a radical innovator giving loose to some sentiments and so which are considered rank treason in the of Vienna.

After some conversation, in which evinced great eagerness to gain details of persons and manners of our most eminent characters, she naturally began to speak literary productions of other countries; short, ere an hour was passed, Vivian Grey of giving a lesson in English pronunciation consort of the Grand-duke of Reichenberg himself listening, in an easy chair, and with arms, to a long treatise by that lady de l'E. *Conversation*. It was a most brilliant due Her kindness in reading it to him was molar; nevertheless, for unexpected bloom are not always sufficiently grateful.

Another hour was consumed by the How she refined! what unexpected distinction! what exquisite discrimination of nationalities! what skilful eulogium of her own! could be more splendid than her elaborate of a repartee; it would have sufficed for poem. At length Madame Carolina ce l'*Esprit de Conversation*, and Vivian w successful in concealing his weariness, and ing his admiration. "The evil is over," he; "I may as well gain credit for my good The lesson in English pronunciation, I was not yet terminated. Madame was with our hero's uncommon discrimination traordinary talents. He was the most skil the most agreeable critic with whom she h been acquainted. How invaluable must the of such a person be to her, on her great No one had yet seen a line of it; but th moments when we are irresistibly impelled a confidant—that confidant was before he morocco case was unlocked, and the man Haroun Al Raschid revealed to the enrapt of Vivian Grey.

"I flatter myself," said Madame Carolina this work will create a great sensation; no Germany. It abounds, I think, with the teresting story, the most engaging inside the most animated and effective description have not, of course, been able to obtain a matter respecting his sublimity, the caliph tween ourselves, I do not think this is v portant. As far as I have observed, v matter enough in this world on every possi ject already. It is *manner* in which the of all nations is deficient. It appears to the great point for persons of genius now t their attention to, is the *expansion* of This I conceive to be the great secret; a must be effected by the art of *picturesque* u For instance, my dear Mr. Grey, I will of Arabian Night's Entertainments, merely exemplification, at the one hundred and fifth night—good! Let us attend to the fol passage:—

"In the reign of the Caliph Haroun Al'

there was at Bagdad a druggist, called Alboussan Ebn Thaher, a very rich, handsome man. He had more wit and politeness than people of his profession ordinarily have. His integrity, sincerity, and jovial humour, made him beloved and sought after by all sorts of people. The caliph, who knew his merit, had an entire confidence in him. He had so great an esteem for him, that he entrusted him with the care to provide his favourite ladies with all the things they stood in need of. He chose for them their clothes, furniture, and jewels, with admirable taste. His good qualities, and the favour of the caliph, made the sons of emirs, and other officers of the first rank, be always about him. His house was the rendezvous of all the nobility of the court."

"What capabilities lurk in this dry passage!" exclaimed Madame Carolina; "I touch it with my pen, and transform it into a chapter. It shall be one of those that I will read to you. The description of Alboussan alone demands ten pages. There is no doubt that his countenance was oriental. The tale says that he was handsome: I paint him with his eastern eye, his thin arched brow, his fragrant eard, his graceful mustachio. The tale says he was rich: I have authorities for the costume of men of his dignity in contemporary writers. In my story, he appears in an upper garment of green elvet, and loose trousers of pink satin; a jewelled agger lies in his golden girdle; his slippers are of the richest embroidery; and he never omits the bath of roses daily. On this system, which in my opinion elicits truth, for by it you are enabled to form a conception of the manners of the age, on this system I proceed throughout the paragraph. Conceive my account of his house being the 'rendezvous of all the nobility of the court.' What a brilliant scene! what a variety of dress and character! what splendour! what luxury! what magnificence! Imagine the detail of the banquet; which, by-the-by, gives me an opportunity of inserting, after the manner of your own Gibbon, 'a dissertation on sherbet.' What think you of the picturesque writing!"

"Admirable!" said Vivian; "Von Chronicle himself—"

"How can you mention the name of that odious man!" almost shrieked Madame Carolina, forgetting the dignity of her semi-regal character, in her jealous feelings of the author. "How can you mention him! A scribbler without a spark, not only of genius, but even of common invention. A miserable fellow, who seems to do nothing but clothe and amplify, in his own fantastic style, the details of a parcel of old chronicles!"

Madame's indignation reminded Vivian of a very true, but rather vulgar proverb of his own country; and he extricated himself from his very awkward situation, with a dexterity worthy of his former years.

"Von Chronicle himself," said Vivian, "Von Chronicle himself, as I was going to observe, will be the most mortified of all on the appearance of your work. He cannot be so blinded by self-conceit, as to fail to observe that your history is a thousand times more interesting than his fiction. Ah! Madame Carolina, if you can thus spread enchantment over the hitherto weary page of history, what must be your work of imagination!"

CHAPTER V.

ALTHOUGH brought up with due detestation of the Methuan treaty, Vivian by no means disapproved of Dr. von Spitterger's remedy. The wine was good and very old; for, not being a very popular liquor with any other European nation, except ourselves, the Porto-Porto had been suffered to ripen under the cobwebs of half a century, in the ample cellar of the grand hotel of the Four Nations, at Reisenberg. As Vivian was hesitating whether he should repeat the dose, or join the court-dinner, Essper George came into the room.

"Please your highness, here is a lady, who wants you!"

"A lady!—who can she be?"

"She did not give her name, but wishes to speak to you."

"Ask her to come up."

"I have, your highness; but she is on horse-back, and refused."

"What kind of person is she?"

"O," drawled out Essper, "she is not as tall as a horseguard, and yet might be mistaken for a church-steeple when there was a cloud over the moon; she is not as stout as Master Rodolph, and yet she would hardly blow away when the wind was down."

The fair horsewoman must not, however, be kept waiting, even if she were as mysterious as an unladen ghost, or a clerk in a public office; and consequently, Vivian speedily made his bow to his interesting visitant.

Miss Melinda von Spitterger, for the amazon was no other than the dread doctor's fair daughter, was full six feet high, thin, and large-boned; her red curly hair was cut very short behind; yet, in spite of this, and her high-boned cheeks, her fine florid complexion, blue eyes, small mouth, and regular white teeth, altogether made up a countenance which was prepossessing. She was mounted on a very beautiful white horse, which never ceased pawing the ground the whole time that it stood before the hotel; and she was dressed in a riding-habit of blue and silver, with buttons as large as Spanish dollars. As the construction of riding-habits is a subject generally interesting to English women, let me say, that Miss von Spitterger's was of a very full make, with a very long waist, and a very high collar. A pink cravat almost as effectively contrasted with the colour of her dress, as her white hat and feathers. She sat on her spirited steed with the nonchalance of a perfect horsewoman; and there was evidently no doubt, that, had it been necessary, she could have used with becoming spirit her long-lashed riding-whip; the handle of which, I should not omit to mention, was formed of a fawn's foot, graced by a silver shoe.

"Good morning, sir!" said Miss von Spitterger, as Vivian advanced. "My father hopes to have the pleasure of your company at dinner to-day. A ride is the very best thing he can prescribe for you; and if you will order your horse, we will be off immediately."

"Dr. von Spitterger is very kind!" said Vivian, quite confused—quite wonder-struck.

"O! not at all; my father is always most happy to see his friends."

"Dr. von Spitterger is very kind," again stam-

mered out our hero, "but I fear an unfortunate engagement—an—"

"I must take no refusal," said Miss von Spittergen, smiling: "a physician's commands are peremptory. You can have no engagement which may not be broken; for you should not have made one without his permission. He expects you at dinner, and to stay the night. Your bed is prepared."

"Really, Dr. von Spittergen is very kind—but—quite ashamed—so much trouble—so—"

"O! not at all. If it were trouble, of course, we should not insist on that which would be alike disagreeable to our friends and to ourselves. Come, order your horse!"

"Really I cannot withstand," said Vivian, a little more collected, "what is at the same time an invitation and a command. It gives me equal pleasure both to accept and to obey."

"I am very happy that I have not failed in my embassy," said Miss von Spittergen. "We will then be off: time presses. Marcus Aurelius flung a shoe on the road, and lost me half an hour, and I wish you to see a little of the country before dinner."

"I will detain you not five minutes; but will you not dismount and walk up stairs till my horse is ready?"

"No: if I dismount, I must stand at his head," said Miss von Spittergen, pointing to her horse; "I cannot trust Marcus Aurelius to any strange groom."

"Well, then, you will excuse me for a moment. I am half engaged at the court-dinner; and I must scribble a line to his excellency the grand-marshal. You will excuse me?"

"Most assuredly! but give them directions about your horse at once."

In ten minutes' time, Vivian and Miss Melinda von Spittergen had left the hotel of the Four Nations. They cantered through the public gardens, and quitted the city through a new gate, which may truly be described as commemorative of the triumph of the Reisenberg troops during the late war. This arch was commenced by Napoleon, after the arrangement of the Confederation of the Rhine. It was not finished, when the event of the battle of Leipzig virtually dissolved that body. By skilfully placing the most personal bas-reliefs in the very highest and obscurest parts of the elevation, and by adroitly converting the countenances in those already placed into the more successful heads of the allied sovereigns, the triumphal arch of the Emperor Napoleon finally commemorated his defeat; and, at this moment, it bears the dignified title of the Gate of the Allies. Through this portal, gayly cantered Miss Melinda von Spittergen and Mr. Vivian Grey.

"This road," said the lady, "leads to our house; but half an hour would carry us there, and from so short a ride you cannot expect any very great benefit; therefore we will make a round, and as there is no cross-road nigh, follow me." So saying, Miss von Spittergen cleared a hedge, with an air which, had it been witnessed by certain gentlemen whom I could mention, would have caused her immediately to be elected an honourable member of the Melton. Vivian Grey followed. Miss von Spittergen, touching Marcus Aurelius with a silver spur, dashed over a field of stubble. Max was not

to be beat, even by Marcus Aurelius! master consequently kept by the lady's side other leap, and another field, and then a gallop at a full gallop. An extensive plain succeeded over which Miss Melinda and Vivian scudded an hour without speaking, like Faust and Topheles on the enchanted steeds. The sun passed, and a downhill gallop over moist and broken ground, proved at the same time sure-footedness of the horses, the courage of von Spittergen, and the gallantry of Vivian. At the bottom of the hill they found the marsh ground, and the next turn revealed them a river: the stream was broad and deep.

"Come on!" said Miss von Spittergen, round.

"Are we obliged to cross this river?" Vivian. "Is there no bridge—no ferry?"

"Bridge or ferry!" said Miss von Spittergen laughing; "what do you want with a bridge or ferry? Follow me, if you please. We will cure this 'little cold' of yours!" So saying von Spittergen pulled up Marcus Aurelius, her knees over his neck, and then tucked her habit several times round them, so that no part hung lower than her horse's mane, she cracked her whip with great spirit, skilfully lashed the man emperor on the ham, and almost before he had observed what she was doing, Marcus Aurelius and Miss Melinda von Spittergen were beyond the boisterous waves. To be outdone by man!—impossible!—and so Vivian Grey, clearing his legs as much as he possibly could, and throwing his stirrups over his saddle, dashed into the stream. It was a tight business; and as he had not the summer been extremely dry, it would not have been fordable. As it was much puffing, and panting, and struggling, the lady and gentleman found themselves on the opposite bank. They had now to ascend a while, a stream which they had just forded watered a The road being very steep, and the horses rather pressed by their passage, Miss von Spittergen, to Vivian's great relief, did not immediately start off at full gallop; and consequently her companion, who actually had not yet had an opportunity of conversing with her, seized the present to compliment her on her horsemanship.

"A most delightful run!" continued Vivian. "I trust it will not fatigue you."

"Why should it?" said Miss von Spittergen smiling her surprise at his apprehensions. "then!—I suppose you think, because I choose to wear a riding-habit instead of a frock-coat, I am to sink under the effects of half an hour's exertion. I know that is your regular English or—"

"No, indeed!" said Vivian—"but such exertions as clearing hedges, and fording rivers!"

"Clearing hedges! fording rivers! you are gone over nothing this morning which need prevented you sleeping on your horse's back. You are not prepared for German cross-road little amble in the park, in the morning. I danced with a fainting fair one for two or three hours in the evening, furnish, I suppose, you of fatigue. Now if I were to pass such a day should die at the end of it."

"Really, you are shockingly severe;" said Vivian, in a deprecating tone. "One would think

was Emilius von Aslingen himself, by your description of my life. I had hoped that my prowess his morning would have saved me from such a reputation; but as I now learn that these feats count for nothing, I confess that I begin to tremble."

"I was not dreaming of casting the least imputation on you," rejoined Miss von Spittergen; "I was merely undeceiving you as regarded myself. If you think that any accidental exhilaration of spirits has produced this exertion, and that I am consequently to be a stupid, sleepy companion for the rest of the day, your alarm will cease, when I inform you that I have not this morning taken one-fourth of my usual exercise; and that even if I were ever so tired, I should be immediately refreshed by half an hour's diving in our great bath. But if you were to tighten me up like one of your native belles, and set me gliding through a quadrille in a hot room, I should expire on the spot. Now, as you look either surprised or incredulous, remember I have proved to you that I can ride; now see that I am prepared to swim." And taking off her hat, Miss von Spittergen exhibited to her companion her close cut hair, in a state as naturally dishevelled as his own.

"Indeed your proof is unnecessary!" said Vivian; "I admire, but do not doubt. Believe me that did not remonstrate with you from any selfish anticipation for the evening; but from an habitual apprehension for the natural fragility of the sex."

"The natural fragility of the sex!" exclaimed Miss von Spittergen, laughing. "Good heavens, Mr. Grey, what a very pretty apprehension! I have vast mind, as a reward for your consideration, that you should listen to a lecture from my father to-night, on the natural powers of the sex. He will tell you, what I am sure is very true—that your creed is a gallant apology for idleness; and vain as it which it attempts to excuse. Depend upon it, that if woman choose to put forth her energies, she will equal you lords of the universe, much as you may think of yourselves!"

"I am the last man in the world to dispute woman's superiority on any point," rejoined Vivian, except as to that physical power which is no proof of excellence; it being an attribute we can either acquire nor command, and one in which even the brutes surpass us. For all those qualities of mind which distinguish—"

"Mercy! Mr. Grey," exclaimed Miss von Spittergen, "you are running headlong into metaphysics, which always distract me. I am not a metaphysician, but a naturalist; and I argue from the experiences of facts, that the natural power of woman is equal to the natural power of man, bodily and mental; and that the difference supposed to exist, does not arise from want of capability, but from want of exercise—just as we ridiculously imagine that the right hand is stronger and more useful than the left, and that the feet are given to us only to walk with. I can fire a musket, and hit my mark as surely with the one hand as with the other; and I know a man who writes beautifully, and can adjust the nicest piece of mechanism with his feet, because, being born without arms, he has used the substitute which nature has given him. But our argument and our ride must now end together; for see! we are at home, and my father is just arriving before us."

Miss von Spittergen pointed through a rising plantation to an old-fashioned house, many rooms

in which would have been consigned to utter obscurity, had it not been for the light which streamed through a small heart cut in the upper part of their heavy oak window-shutters. The house stood on a green, which was surrounded by a wall not more than two feet high; and to the left, barns, stables, stacks, and piles of wood presented the appearance of a well-ordered farm. Miss von Spittergen and Vivian crossed a dike from the plantation, and immediately passing through a large white wooden gate, with two hideous griffins grinning on the top of it, Marcus Aurelius dashed up to the stable door, followed by Max. They were instantly saluted by an immense Newfoundland, whose joyous bark was answered by a responsive neigh from his companion of the stable; and in an instant, Triton was scrambling up Marcus Aurelius, for the pleasure of biting Miss von Spittergen's silver buttons, and licking her face with his great red tongue.

"Down—down, Triton!"

Triton obeyed very unwillingly, but turning round, felt himself greatly consoled for his rebuff, by seeing that he had to welcome a visitor. He flew up at Max's neck. The princely pet, unused to such rude embraces, showed certain signs of exclusiveness, which made Vivian exercise his whip across master Triton's back; who, in his turn, was equally irate at this unusual and ungrateful reception of his caresses. The dog slunk from under Vivian's lash, and springing up behind Max, made him give a sudden and violent kick, which sent Vivian, unprepared as he was, head foremost into some low, thick bushes of box, which had been planted to screen a pig-sty. It was fortunate for him that he did not make an unexpected appearance in the abode of Miss von Spittergen's favourite Columбина—a Chinese lady-pig, with a young family of delicate daughters, all so exquisitely high-bred, that they were almost without heads, bones, or feet. Columбина's maternal fears might have inflicted on Vivian some wounds, which he escaped receiving in the yielding box—from which, indeed, he most quickly extricated himself—animated in his rapid exertions to regain the dignified perpendicular by the loud and unrestrained laughter of Miss von Spittergen, who saw that he had not received the slightest injury, and was therefore most unmercifully mirthful.

"Well, Mr. Grey! my father need not have been afraid of your inertness. I never met with a finer instance of agility. It is fortunate that I did not take Triton out with me, according to my usual custom, if this be a specimen of the result of your companionship. How came you to jump off your horse in such a hurry? You should have given Max a lesson, instead of leaving him to caper about by himself."

"How came I to jump off?" said Vivian; "in truth, Max was not courteous enough to offer me an alternative; but we must remember that he is not yet used to your treatment, and excuse a little ill-humour."

A vis-à-vis drove up to the door, just as Miss von Spittergen and Vivian were about to enter. They were met on the broad flight of steps by a very old white-headed domestic, who bowed low as they passed them, to open the carriage door for his master. The door was opened, but no Dr. von Spittergen alighted. The old valet gently closed it again, but remained standing by the side of the vehicle.

"Well, Francis," said Miss von Spittergen; "why have you shut the door?"

"Please you, my young lady," said the venerable attendant; "my master is dozing: is it your pleasure that I should try to wake him?"

"Asleep, is he? oh! I'll wake him myself—Sir! here is Mr. Grey, our visitor; will not you come into the house?"

"Ah! ah! true! which is he! how much does he weigh! more than me!" asked the good doctor, waking, his morning doze having presented to him an image, of which he was always either thinking or dreaming—a man larger than himself. This character, Dr. von Spittergen had not yet been so fortunate as to meet; though his first inquiry, on the mention of any stranger's name, invariably was, "how much does he weigh?"

Miss von Spittergen, perfectly aware that her father was not yet quite awake, only laughed at his question, and instead of replying to it, asked another.

"Whom have you seen to-day, sir—and what news have you brought us?"

"News! why, I have been in a confounded passion; perhaps that is no news."

"What is all this about, sir? who has been disobeying orders?"

"If you ask twenty questions at the same time, I should like to know how I am to answer them; let me out!"

The doctor descended, and leaning on the arm of his daughter, and followed by Vivian, he entered the house; muttering the whole way without ceasing, much after the following fashion.

"My mind's made up. I have said it before—most people make a great talk, and it ends in nothing—that's not my way—when I say a thing, I do it. Melinda! why haven't you gathered the seed of that geranium? it won't be worth a kreuzer. How do you feel after your ride, Mr. Grey? Don't both speak at the same time—I can't bear such a Babel in my ears—not that I believe there ever was such a thing! Well, sir! you haven't told me how you are, though—glad to go to your room, I suppose? But, I say, Melinda—in spite of all I have said to the grand-duke, here's Madame Carolina ill again—that is, I don't think there's any thing the matter with her—some whim-wham! though if she were to die, I shouldn't much wonder, breathing the same air over and over again every night, smothered up in that state-bed. I told the grand-duke this morning, for the hundredth time, that bed-curtains were the origin of every disease, and that if he doesn't order away those heavy hangings, he may find a court physician where he can. Where's Theresa, that she doesn't come to show Mr. Grey his room? He's tired to death, I dare say; just as I said—nothing of him! no stamina! Pray, sir, what sort of man was your father? how much did he weigh?"

"This way, sir, if you please," said a little thin old woman, in a starched ruff and cap, as she led Vivian down a long passage. "Mind the step, sir, if you please; these old houses are full of them; master often talks of levelling them, but it's all talk with him, sir. I have lived in this house fifty years without seeing any alteration. This is your room, sir; you will remember it by the great bow-pot which I have put beside your toilet table. I don't know whether you'll find the bed too high at the head, sir, we have no curtains, and master

does not allow any of us to sleep under eider-down. He has his peculiarities, and there's no getting him out of an old way. This bottle is rose-water, sir, for your face; and this is eau de Cologne of my own making. There is a bell, sir. I wish you good day!"

Although Vivian's toilet was far from being a complicated one, a considerable time elapsed before it was completed. Indeed, he found some difficulty, even in taking off his coat; for every exertion of his arms set him sliding a yard or two on the highly polished floor, and in five minutes he had unwittingly described all the complicated figures of a first-rate skater. He first flew up against a large embroidered fire-screen, which the delicate fingers of some female Von Spittergen had, ages ago, covered with carnations and ranunculuses; and then whirling through the mazes of a figure of eight, he nearly drove his elbow through a small pane of the heavy-framed window. A semi-circle brought him in contact with the foot of his low bed, from which he bounded off at a right angle, and found himself seated in a high-backed, carved oaken chair. Here, while he sat forming plans for reaching the so often missed toilet-table, the sound of the dinner-bell made him desperate; and thinking that he could best secure his steps by walking fearlessly over the floor, he made a courageous advance, which ended in upsetting Mistress Theresa's bow-pot. Scarcely flattering himself that the good lady would suspect a favourite cat of the injury done to her toilet garniture, Vivian, in a precipitate retreat, forgot the fatal step, of which he had been previously warned, and measured his length in the corridor.

CHAPTER XL

"WELL, Mr. Grey," said the doctor, as Vivian entered the dining-room, "have you been asleep after your ride, or has Mistress Theresa, according to her usual custom, been showing you the family curiosities?"

"Neither the one nor the other, doctor; but I was delayed in my room."

"Ah! I don't want any explanation. I hate explanations. What sort of an appetite have you got?"

"O! a very good one; and I have no doubt that I shall do full justice to—"

"Ah! you need not tell me what you are going to do. Come, sit down to the table. Melinda give me some soup—and, Mr. Grey, I'll thank you for an outside slice of that beef in it—and, Francis, bring me some sour kroust, and those stewed apicots from the side table."

While Miss von Spittergen was helping Vivian, the doctor proceeded to chop and mash up all these contrasting viands in his large soup plate. Four spoonfuls emptied it, before his guest had tasted a mouthful; for, though in violation of all etiquette, Vivian could not take his eyes off the owner of the appetite. His astonishment did not escape notice.

"What are you looking at?" asked the doctor, gruffly. "You had better eat your own dinner than stare at me."

"I beg pardon, but—"

"Ah! don't beg pardon. I hate apologies.

Vivian, much confused, turned round to his

drer neighbour; and, to his horror, found that he was consuming her dinner after the same fashion, though it must be confessed, not with equal aptitude of execution.

"You see your dinner, Mr. Grey," said Miss von Spittergen. "We never consider any one a stranger. Shall I give you some more soup?"

"More soup! what, is he going to dine off soup? Why don't you give him some beef, and cream, and kid, and custard! He must eat."

"Yes, doctor, I thank you; I will taste all your good dishes—but not all at once."

"Fish! what should you know about it! You at your dinner on a wrong principle, or rather on a principle at all. Take all that you want on our plate at once. I suppose, if you were set down to a venison pasty, you would eat the flour and water, and butter and balls, and eggs and truffles, and wine and spices, and fat and flesh, all separately! that's your notion of feeding, is it? What are you laughing at?"

"Do you, then, recommend, doctor—"

"Recommend! I recommend nothing! what's the use of recommending? people never attend."

"But I will attend, doctor," said Vivian. "Remember, I am already an obedient patient; therefore, I believe I shall trouble you, Miss von Spittergen, in the first place, for a small slice of that id—"

"Couldn't take any thing worse! no nourishment in it! How comes it here, Melinda?"

"Well, then, doctor, I'll follow your example, and take some of the beef."

"Ah! you should have begun with it at once: later late than never, though. You have been badly managed, I see that! Stay with us a month; we'll get you round. Now, you must have some of your physic! Francis, give Mr. Grey the line."

"Perhaps I may have the honour of taking a glass with you, Miss von Spittergen?" asked Vivian.

"Taking a glass with her! what's the matter with her, that she is to take wine?"

"Possibly you are not aware, Mr. Grey," said Miss von Spittergen, "that in this house we never take wine except as a medicine; let me join you to my usual beverage."

"A glass of filtered water!" growled the doctor; if you are a wise man, you'll make that your drink; that is, as soon as we have made something of you."

"Filtered water!" exclaimed Vivian with surprise.

"Yes, filtered water! who the deuce drinks water without filtering it! I suppose you are fond of fattening yourself with the scum of eels, vipers, lizards, newts, tadpoles, frogs, rats, and all other filthy animal and vegetable."

"If water contain all these monsters and horrors," said Vivian laughing, "I should have thought that it would have been the favourite beverage of our system, doctor. Is it not correct, then, to drink all things at once, as well as eat them? But surely," continued Vivian "a glass of spring water must be free from all these disgusting appendages."

"Fish! it shows how much you know about the matter. Did you ever see a drop of water through a microscope!—You haven't, eh!—I thought not. Melinda, after dinner show him the microscope. We'll amuse you as well as we can."

Dinner being over, the doctor retired to his study, and Miss von Spittergen and Vivian agreed to take a stroll.

"Now, Mr. Grey," said the lady, "you must know that I am a great walker. Some dislike moving after dinner; but if that be not your case, I propose taking you my usual round: and first of all, as I see Peter coming out of the stable, I wish to say a word to him about Marcus Aurelius." Miss von Spittergen proceeded to give directions for all her horse's shoes to be taken off over-night, and his frogs looked to in the morning. "Now," continued she, "I must see how they go on with their wood stacking. We have lately had a fall of beech-wood; and although all of us have been busily picking and splitting for the last week, we have not yet finished. It is very important that the stacks should be well piled. Last year, when I was absent, and trusted the business to our neighbour's steward, we had more than half our stock spoiled by the rains, and a great quantity besides fell over. I admire nothing more than a well-stacked pile of wood. It is always a sign of good management."

"I am ashamed to own," said Vivian, "how ignorant I am upon all these points; though I assure you I do not the less admire your perfect acquaintance with the subject. To me, it is equally new and delightful to see a lady so completely interesting herself in her domestic economy."

"There is little merit in my exertions," said Miss von Spittergen. "Although I am, at the present moment, extremely fond of the life I lead, necessity, not choice, first made me mistress of these details. Their acquisition is, at least, a proof of the truth of my observations this morning; though, I suppose, according to your theory," continued Miss von Spittergen, smiling; "to direct a fall of wood, or the thatching of a granary, which I must superintend to-morrow morning, are not very meritorious actions; I being, in a great measure, enabled to interfere in such affairs, from the possession of that unfortunate physical strength, which, if you remember, Mr. Grey, is no proof of excellence."

The walk lasted some hours; there was much done—much said. The fields, the meadows, the orchards, the woods, all demanded some care, and received some superintendence. Many men were to be instructed, and ordered, and directed. One field was to lie fallow, another to be sown with different seed. The cattle were to change their meadows. Some woods were to be counted, some hills to be planted. On all these affairs, and on all these subjects, Miss von Spittergen was the directing head. No one applied to her, and returned unsatisfied: every one received a ready answer. Yet with all these calls upon her attention and her judgment, she did not fail to prove a most interesting companion. Her general conversation showed that her mind was highly cultivated and accomplished. She also detailed to Vivian, as passing objects gave rise to the subject, the various plans of her father and herself for the amelioration of the condition of their tenants, which they wished principally to bring about by extricating them from the harassing restraints of the old feudal system, injurious alike to the landlord and the tenant. Her admiration of nature also was sincere, and her taste refined. As they walked alone, she called her companion's attention to any striking combination

and effect—a peep at the distant country, through an opening in a deep wood—the light of the declining sun, seen through the trunks of a grove of beeches—a waterfall caused by a strong brook dashing over some sand rocks, and cooling the boughs of the white-rind willows. Although Vivian, in the latter years of his life, had actually lived in a forest, it seemed that he had gained more information on his much-loved trees in a few hours' walk with Miss von Spittergen, than he had during the whole time that he was roaming about Heidelberg. He was now strongly reminded of the great difference between revery and observation. He remembered sitting for hours with his eyes fixed upon a tree, of whose nature he now found himself utterly ignorant; for Miss von Spittergen spoke of the physiology of trees; and Vivian was ashamed when he confessed his want of knowledge. While he expressed his wonder and admiration of much that she said, she promised that in the evening, the microscope should elucidate and reveal more. The air was mild and sweet—the exercise exhilarating—conversation never flagged. Without annoying such a woman with unmeaning compliments, Vivian properly evinced his admiration of Miss von Spittergen's accomplishments; and delicately conveyed to her his sincere declarations that, for a long time, he had not passed a day so agreeably, and with such satisfaction.

"I told you," continued Miss von Spittergen, "that necessity, not choice, first induced me to adopt a mode of life, which now has for me the greatest charms. I passed my earliest years with an uncle, an old baron, in a Gothic castle. A library full of romances soon convinced me that I was born to be a heroine, and that unless I were a heroine life had no delight. For the commonplace realities of life I entertained a thorough disgust: I rode all day through my uncle's park and forests, in quest of a hero for the romance which I formed in my nightly reveries. I lived in a world of my own creation; I conversed with no one. My mind was constantly occupied with an impossible idea. Passing my time thus, I formed no conception of the existence of duties. My fellow-creatures, if I thought of them at all, were merely the instruments by whose agency I was to pass my life in a constant state of excitement. Very short time elapsed before I was convinced that I was a peculiar being, and was ordained to occasion some singular revolution. I expected, every day, the crisis of my fate. About this time my dear and only brother died in battle; and my mother, overcome by the loss, followed him in a few weeks to the grave. My desolate parent now demanded from my uncle his only remaining child. I left the castle with no reluctance, for I was firmly convinced that my career was now to begin. The appearance of my father, whom I had seen regularly every year, was the first shock to my romance. He was so overwhelmed by his misery, that his terrible grief called forth in me those natural sensations of the existence of which I was ignorant. You must know, Mr. Grey," continued Miss von Spittergen, with a smile, "that I am the most decided enemy of long stories, and therefore I shall cut my own very short. The result of my return to my home is evident to you. To be the consolator, and then the confidant, and then the assistant of my father, were quick decrees of my destiny. A mind naturally ardent and enthusiastic, was

now, I am sure, well directed; and has been, I trust, well employed. To my beloved and highly gifted parent, I have endeavoured to be both wife, and son, and daughter. By my exertions, the loss of his dear connections has not disarranged the accustomed tenour of his life; nor has his mind been troubled by duties, for which his temper and education have completely unfitted him. Under a rough exterior, he conceals the most generous and beneficent of dispositions; and in spite of his quaint humour, you cannot live many days with him without discovering the cultivation of his intellect. I need not add that my romance was quickly dissipated, and my father has become to me the hero of my reality."

Miss von Spittergen entered the house, to arrange her dress for the evening. Vivian remained on the terrace. The red autumnal sun had just sunk over an immense extent of champagne country. The evening mists from the ruddy river were already ascending, and the towers and steeples of a neighbouring city rose black against the shining sky. Sunset is the time when memory is most keen; and as Vivian Grey sat on the marble wall, gazing on the wide landscape, his sorrowing mind was not inactive. Never, until this moment, had he felt how precious, how invaluable were the possession and performance of a duty! The simple tale of his late companion had roused a thousand thoughts. His early, his insane career, flitted across his mind. He would have stifled the remembrance with a sigh; but man is the slave of memory. He, too, had thought himself a peculiar creature: he, too, had lived in a world of his own creation: he, too, had sacrificed himself to an idea: he, too, had looked upon his fellow-creatures as the puppets of his will. Would that his reveries had been as harmless as this maiden's! Would that he could compensate for his errors, and forget his follies in a life of activity, of usefulness, of beneficence! To the calm satisfaction and equal tenour of such a life, why had he madly preferred the wearing anxiety, the consuming care, the eternal vigilance, the constant contrivance, the agonizing suspense, the distracting vicissitudes of his own career? Alas! it is our nature to sicken, from our birth, after some object of unattainable felicity—to struggle through the freshest years of our life in an insane pursuit after some indefinite good, which does not even exist! But sure and quick is the dark hour which cools our doting frenzy in the frigid waves of the ocean of oblivion! We dream of immortality until we die. Ambition! at thy proud and fatal altar we whisper the secrets of our mighty thoughts, and breathe the aspirations of our inexpressible desires. A clouded flame licks up the offering of our ruined souls, and the sacrifice vanishes in the sable smoke of death.

But where are his thoughts wandering? Had he forgotten that day of darkest despair? There had that happened to him which had happened to no other man. In the conflict of his emotions he ceased to reason. This moment he believed himself the slave of destiny, and the next, the sport of chance. Sad, and serious, and wavering, Vivian entered the house, uncertain of every thing except his misery.

He found Dr. von Spittergen and his agreeable daughter at the tea-table.

"Well, Mr. Grey," said the doctor, "which do you prefer? the Fickel-tan or the Ben-tan?"

"Really, sir, I am almost afraid to avow, that I am perfectly ignorant of what you are talking about."

"Perfectly ignorant of what I am talking about! Why, Melinda, here is Mr. Grey drinking tea every day of his life, and does not know the proper name of it, even when he hears it mentioned; and he belongs to a tea-drinking nation, too!"

"Why, my good sir, I know the difference between black and green tea."

"How do you know that there is a difference? Linneus says there is: Thunberg says there is not. If you can decide, pray instruct us."

"I believe," said Vivian, "there is no nation which drinks more tea, and knows less of its nature and culture, than the English. We are always satisfied to take what is given us for black or green."

"You are not so easy to be dealt with about wine though," said the doctor, laughing: "merely to be aware of the difference between red and white wine is, I imagine, information not sufficiently definite to tempt an Englishman to taste; and why should you be less particular about tea, of which you receive in your country eight or nine different kinds? I suppose you are so indifferent about it, because you drink it twice a-day, and wine only once! Ho! ho-o-o-o!" This was the learned doctor's laugh: something like the hoot of a facetious owl.

"Well, my dear father," said Miss von Spittergen, "the best way to teach Mr. Grey the difference will be, to give him a basin of your curious *'icki-tsiaa*."

"Yes; and while you make it, I'll tell him what it means. As society is divided into three classes," continued the doctor, "so there are three different gatherings of tea, suited to the quality of each. I suppose you know that tea is the leaf of a shrub? The first gathering commences in the beginning of March, when the leaves are small and tender, not more than four days' growth. This and you are going to drink—the *Picki-tsiaa*, or special, kept for the court and people of quality. This was given to me by the young Prince of Orange, who sickened at our court. No wonder! He thought I had saved his life: I only sent him some. The second gathering takes place in the beginning of April. The leaves are then pretty well grown. This they call *Too-tsiaa*: this infusion is good enough for the middling classes. And in June, all the leaves which have not been ripped off for their betters, get tough and pungent, and are left for the mob, and this they call *'en-tsiaa*; and I think it is the best of all. We always drink it—don't we, Melinda?"

Vivian, though very much amused by the doctor's lecture, could not help watching his fair daughter, whose novel method of infusing this very rare beverage not a little surprised him. Miss von Spittergen first filled a cup with boiling water, and then threw into it a tea-spoonful of powder, which she took out of a small porcelain vase. She stirred the powder in the water until the liquid began to steam: then she offered the cup to Vivian.

"Drink it off!" said the doctor; "and let us see how you like *'icki-tsiaa*."

"But are not all these particles to settle first?" asked Vivian, who was rather fearful of the boiling draught.

"I suppose," said the doctor, "you let all your

vegetables settle in your soup, before your delicacy can venture to sip it. Drink it off, man! Perhaps you think it is like that confounded stuff made in England, called bohea, which deposits in every cup a mash of sloe-leaves!"

The doctor drank plentifully of his favourite *ben-tsiaa*, and praised the shrub in proportion to his enjoyment. He compared it with wine, on which latter beverage he wreaked his spleen without mercy, enumerating all the evils which the immoderate use of fermented liquors produces; while tea, on the contrary, he declared would contribute more to the sobriety of a nation, than the severest laws, the most eloquent sermons, or the best moral treatises. It was a perfect antidote to intemperance. The man who relishes tea, seldom wants wine.

Vivian reminded Miss von Spittergen of her promise about the microscope and the trees; and in a few minutes they were busily examining a cutting of ash. She first pointed out to him the bark, and described its uses; and then explained the sap-vessels, the lymph-ducts, the great and lesser air-vessels, the pith, and the true wood. She also pointed out the annual rings which mark the age of the tree, and showed likewise a dissected leaf, exhibiting the nerves branching out into innumerable small threads; and explained to him how the pores in the leaf served both for perspiration and absorption. Vivian was quite surprised to discover the proximity in the economy of vegetable and animal life. It appeared to him, that, with the exception of sensibility and motion, one system was nearly as complete as the other. Nor, while he found himself acquiring so much new information, could he help mournfully feeling, how very different an acquaintance with the world is to a knowledge of nature.

CHAPTER VII.

THE acquaintance between Master Rodolph and Essper George had been renewed with as much cordiality as that between their respective masters. When one man is wealthy, and another agreeable, intimacy soon ensues. The wit is delighted with the good dishes of the man of wealth, and the man of wealth with the good sayings of the wit. Such friendships, in general, are as lasting as they are quickly cemented. They are formed on equal terms. Each party has some failing to be excused, as each has some good quality to recommend him. While the pun of the wit is bartered for the patsy of his host, he can endure the casual arrogance of the master of the feast, provided he may occasionally indulge in a little malice of his own.

A place was never wanting for Essper George at the table of the former steward of the Prince of Little Lilliput; or, as he was now styled, the Intendant of his excellency the grand-marshal; and as the worthy Master Rodolph pressed with vehemence his pursy sides, from a well founded apprehension that his frequently excited laughter might disturb the organization of his stupendous system, he felt that the good stories of Essper George amply repaid him for his often-exercised hospitality. But it was not merely his laughter-loving humour that occasioned Essper's company to be acceptable to his friend the intendant. Easily as Master Rodolph

was tickled by a jest, and remarkable as was his quickness in detecting the point of a very evident joke, the facetious qualities of Essper George were not the only causes which gained our hero's valet a welcome reception at all times in the steward's hall. Cæsar loved to be surrounded by *sleek* men; the intendant of the grand-marshal by *short* ones. Five feet five inches, exactly Master Rodolph's own height, was, according to the worthy steward's theory of the beautiful, a perfect altitude. Nevertheless, a stature somewhat beneath this model ever found favour in his sight. In short, a tall man was Master Rodolph's aversion; and it was the study of his life, that his friends and boon companions should be shorter than himself. For many years his intimate friend was the late Princess of Little Lilliput's dwarf. When their mistress died, Master Rodolph's friend, either through grief for her loss, or from water in his head, it was never decided which, "set also his foot within grim Charon's boat." Master Rodolph was in despair. There was not a full grown individual at Turriparva under six feet two; and even the young Prince Maximilian, although still much beneath the due limit, grew so apace, that, as all were perpetually observing, there was a very fair chance of his rivalling in height old Ernestus von Little Lilliput himself—the founder of the family—whose armour, still rusting in the Giant's Hall, proved that the stature of the great figures themselves was not ideal. The hospitable prince himself could not therefore welcome the presence of his preserver in his own castle with greater joy, than did Master Rodolph the presence of that preserver's valet. Essper George, he immediately determined, was a good three inches shorter than himself—eternal friendship was the instant consequence. At first Essper, who of course could not be intuitively aware of the foible of Master Rodolph, seized every opportunity of maintaining and proving, that the good steward was much the shorter of the two; and as the knave could stand and walk on his toes the whole day, with the greatest facility, and without the least chance of detection, he found little difficulty, the first day, in making his kind host extremely miserable. But four-and-twenty hours could not elapse without Essper discovering that, which was as constantly the subject of Master Rodolph's thought and conversation, as the hitherto unseen, and unmet, and unheard of "stouter man," was of the dreams and researches of Dr. von Spittergen. Consequently, on the second day of his visit at Turriparva, Mr. Essper George sunk down to his natural height; confessed, and continually dwelt on the superiority of Master Rodolph; and was daily rewarded for the shortness of his stature, and the candour of his disposition, by the best wines and choicest dishes that Turriparva could afford.

On the day that his master dined with Dr. von Spittergen, Essper George had made a particular engagement with Mr. Intendant, to drink the health of the new grand-marshal, over a bottle of the very Burgundy, by the influence of which they had, a few weeks before, discovered his treason. Accordingly, about four hours after noon, Essper found himself in Master Rodolph's private room. He was introduced to two strangers—the first, Mr. Speigelburg, was about five feet four inches and a half high. He was a decayed gentleman-usher, who had retired on a pension of eighty dollars per annum. Although this stipend may be considered

a very scanty one, by some who encumber the civil list of this country, nevertheless Mr. Speigelburg contrived not only to exist without incurring debts to his tradesmen or his friends, but even to procure the reputation of being a man who lived within his income; and this, too, without the suspicion of being a niggard. The full court-suit in which he now bowed to Essper George, although the very one in which he had assisted at the entrance of the Emperor Napoleon into Reisenberg, was still not unworthy of a royal drawing-room. His shoes were the most highly polished in the city, his buckles the brightest, his linen the most pure. If the expenses of his wardrobe did not materially reduce his hard-earned pension of eighty crowns, assuredly the cost of living, naturally fond as Mr. Speigelburg was of good cheer, was likewise no great obstacle to his saving passion. A prudently cherished friendship, of old standing, with the court-cook, insured the arrival of a welcome hamper more than once during the week at his neat lodging; and, besides this, Mr. Speigelburg was as systematic and as schooled a diner-out, as if he had been born and bred in Brook Street. His former connexion, and present acquaintance with the court, allowed him to garnish his conversation with many details interesting to the females of the humbler bourgeoisie. With them, indeed, from his various little accomplishments, Mr. Speigelburg was an especial favourite; and a Sunday party to the royal retreat, or the royal farm, or a Sunday promenade on the ramparts, or in the public gardens, was never thought complete without his presence. His highly-polished and obliging manners, his facetious humour, his good stories, in which he very much prided himself, and in which frequent repetition had rendered him very perfect, and above all, the dignified and rather consequential bearing which he knew well when to assume, made him as popular and considered a personage with the men, as with their wives. But the brightest moment in Mr. Speigelburg's existence, was the apostacy of the Prince of Little Lilliput. In due time he had been introduced by the intendant of his excellency the grand-chamberlain, to the intendant of his excellency the grand-marshal; and Master Rodolph no sooner set his eyes upon him, than he internally vowed that Mr. Speigelburg should dine at the prince's expense as long as his master continued a great officer of state, and he the master's intendant. Such was one of the guests invited to meet our friend Essper George. The other was a still more singular-looking personage.

When Essper was introduced to Mr. Lintz, a considerable time elapsed before he perceived a figure, which he considered to be a child, bowing to him without ceasing, in the corner of the room. Had Essper George been a long resident in Reisenberg, an introduction to Mr. Lintz would have been unnecessary. Indeed, that gentleman had already called upon Vivian, though hitherto, unfortunately, without succeeding in seeing him. Mr. or to use a title by which he was better known, Little Lintz, was one of those artists whose fate is indissolubly bound up with that of their native city; and who seem to value no reputation which is not liberally shared with the place of their residence. The pencil of Mr. Lintz immortalized the public buildings of Reisenberg, and the public buildings of Reisenberg supported their artist. "The grand square, the royal palace, the public gardens,

grand hotel of the Four Nations"—these constant, the only subjects of Mr. Lintz's Few were the families in the city whose whose collections, were not adorned or with these accurate representations. Few travellers who sojourned at the hotel, allowed to quit its hospitable roof unaccompanied by a set of Mr. Lintz's drawings. The discrimination of the artist in the selection of subjects, of course made the landlord of the house his sworn friend and warmest patron. In the house, it was as regular an affair to stage the arts, as to fee the waiters. With the successful patronage, Little Lintz of course did not. Day after day passed over, only to his already innumerable and favourite works. Doubtless Little Lintz could have had no more faithful representation of every brick and mortar square of Reisenberg with his eyes in spite of his good fortune, and unlike most artists, Little Lintz was an extremely modest personage. Not being much above five feet and a half high, Master Rodolph had, from the first, immediately sunned him with the rays of successful patronage. Orders were showered upon him in invitations sent in, with profusion and abundance. Every member of the grand-marshal's household was obliged, as a personal favour to the artist, to take a set of the four views. Every member of the grand-marshal's house was graced by his personal presence; and as for the artist himself, his room of cellar and larder was immediately improved.

As for the merrier party never met together than in the little men. Mr. Speigelburg, who was called for the occasion, let off a good story of the first bottle was finished. The salute was then returned by Eesper George. Master Rodolph presented the most ludicrous instance of good mirth; and laying down his knife and fork, and red that they were "in truth a pair of most cunning knaves." Little Lintz said nothing, but he gave his lips, lest laughter should destroy his lungs; his diminutive hands and eyes, anon raised up in admiration of the wit and companions, and his heels resting on the bar of the air. No one, at first, was more surprised and pleased with Eesper George's humour, than Speigelburg himself. A rival wit is the early detested of mortals; and the little old man, alarmed at the rapidity and point of his narratives and repartees, began to think that a poacher on his manor might prove almost good for the game laws; and so Mr. Speigelburg was up in his seat, and grew dull and dignified a very short time elapsed ere Mr. Speigelburg discovered that Eesper George was neither of his reputation, nor emulous of rivaling him in his jokes and jollity were occasioned by the overflowings of a merry spirit, than by design to supersede him in the favour of the little men. No one laughed at Mr. Speigelburg's wit more thoroughly than enthusiasm—no one more to the point of Mr. Speigelburg's jests with a stinging celerity, than the man whom he had mistaken for an odious and a dangerous rival. Speigelburg's present satisfaction was in contrast to his previous discontent, and he and were soon on the most intimate terms. Burgundy in due time produced every regu-

and the little men made noise enough for

as many Brobdignags. First they talked very loud, then they sang very loud; then they talked all together very loud, then they sang all together very loud. Such are four of the five gradations of Burgundian inebriety!—but we have had invocations enough; it is a wine of which we know nothing in England. No man should presume to give an opinion upon Burgundy, who has not got tipsy at Dijon. In the course of half a dozen hours, one of the party experienced some inconvenient symptoms of an approach to the fifth and final gradation. Master Rodolph began to get very drowsy; the fat Chambertin was doing its duty. In order to rouse himself from his stupor, the intendant proposed that they should amuse themselves with a little *zwickien*; but as this game was no favourite with Mr. Speigelburg, the party finally resolved to sit down to whist.

The table was cleared, and Eesper was Rodolph's partner. The intendant managed to play through the game very well, and to Mr. Speigelburg's mortification, won it. He would probably have been equally successful in the rubber, had he remained awake; but invisible sleep at last crept over Master Rodolph's yielding senses, and although he had two by honours in his own hand, he snored. O, Burgundy! but I forgot—I will go on with my story.

No sooner had the nasal sound of Master Rodolph caught the ever-ready ear of Eesper George, than that wicked knave quickly pressed his finger to his mouth, and winking to Mr. Speigelburg and Little Lintz, immediately obtained silence,—a silence which was not disturbed by the soundless whisper in which Eesper spoke to both his companions. What he was detailing or suggesting, time will reveal; his violent gesticulation, animated action, and the arch and mischievous expression of his countenance, promised much. Apparently, the other guests readily acceded to his proposition, and Eesper George accordingly extinguished the two candles. As there was no fire, and the shutters were closed, the room was now in perfect darkness.

"Play!" shouted Eesper George in a loud voice, and he dashed his fist upon the table.

"Play!" hallooed Mr. Speigelburg.

"Play!" even screamed Little Lintz.

"What, what, what's the matter?" mumbled Master Rodolph, rubbing his eyes and fumbling for his cards.

"Play!" again shouted Eesper George.

"Play!" again hallooed Mr. Speigelburg.

"Play!" again screamed Little Lintz.

"Play!" said Master Rodolph, who was now pretty well awake. "Play!—play what!"

"Why, a diamond if you have got one," said Eesper George. "Can't you see? Are you blind? Haan't Mr. Speigelburg led a diamond?"

"A diamond!" said Master Rodolph.

"Yes, a diamond to be sure; why what's the matter with you? I thought you played the last trick very queerly."

"I can't see," said Master Rodolph, in a very doleful voice.

"Come, come!" said Eesper; "let us have no joking. It is much too important a point in the game to warrant a jest. Play a diamond if you have one, and if not, trump!"

"You have no right to tell your partner to trump," said Mr. Speigelburg, with mock indignation; for he had entered into the conspiracy with

readiness, as he now saw a chance, by its concoction, of saving himself from losing the rubber.

"He has a right to tell his partner any thing," said Master Rodolph, equally indignant at this interference; "but I tell you I can't see."

"Can't see!" said Essper George; "what do you mean?"

"I mean exactly what I say," said Master Rodolph, somewhat testy. "I can't see; I am not joking the least. I can't see a single pip of a single card. Have I been asleep?"

"Asleep!" said Essper George, in a tone of extreme surprise. "It's an odd thing for a man to be asleep, and play every card as regularly as you have done, and as well too. I never remember you playing so well as you have done to-night:—that finesse with the spade last trick, was quite admirable. Had you only played half as well, the night you and I sat against long Halbert and Sax the pikeman, the night, you remember, in the yellow room at Turripurva, I should not have lost a silver dollar. But what has having been asleep to do with it?" continued Essper. "Had you slept for a century, your eyes are open wide enough now. Why you stare like a pig four-and-twenty hours before salting. Speigeburg, did you ever see a man stare so in all your life! Little Lintz, did you?"

"Never!" said Speigeburg with enthusiasm; the rubber was now certainly saved.

"Never!" screamed Little Lintz.

"I have been asleep," said Master Rodolph, in a very loud, and rather angry voice; "I have been asleep—I am asleep—you are all asleep—we are all talking in our sleep—a'n't we?"

"Talking in our sleep!" said Essper George, affecting to be stifled with laughter; "Well! this is what I call carrying a joke rather too far. Come, Master Rodolph, play like a man."

"Yes, yes!" said Mr. Speigeburg; "play, play."

"Yes, yes!" said Little Lintz; "play, play."

"How can I play!" said Master Rodolph, his anger now turning into alarm.

"Why, with your hands to be sure!" said Essper George.

"Good Master Rodolph," said Mr. Speigeburg, in rather a grave tone, as if he were slightly offended; "be kind enough to remember that cards were your own proposition. I have no wish to continue playing if it be disagreeable to you; nor have I any objection, if it be your pleasure, although I have a very good hand, to throw up my cards altogether. What say you, Mr. Lintz?"

"No objection at all," said the little man; biting his lips in the dark with renewed vigour.

"Thank you, Mr. Speigeburg," said Essper George, "but I, and my partner, have a great objection to your throwing up your cards. If you are satisfied with your hand, so much the better: I am satisfied with mine. I am sure, however, your partner cannot be with his; for I see nothing but twos and threes in it. Now, do me the favour, Mr. Lintz, to hold your cards nearer to you. There is nothing I detest so much as seeing my adversary's hand. I say this, I assure you, not out of any affected admiration of fair play; but the truth is, it really puzzles me. I derive no benefit from this improper knowledge. Now, do hold your cards up; you really are a most careless player. Nearer, nearer, nearer still!"

These matter-of-fact observations and requests

of Essper George, effectually settled Master Rodolph's brain; never very acute, and now muddled with wine.

"Do you mean to say," asked he in a most tremulous and quivering voice, "Do you mean to say that you are all seeing at this very moment?"

"To be sure!" was the universal shout.

"Every one of us!" continued Essper; "why, what maggot have you got into your brain! I actually begin to believe that you are not joking after all. Cannot you really see? and yet you stare so! did you ever see a man stare so, Mr. Speigeburg! and now that I look again, the colour of your eyes is changed!"

"Is it, indeed?" asked Master Rodolph, with gasping breath.

"O! decidedly; but let us be quite sure. Little Lintz, put that candle nearer to Master Rodolph. Now I can see well; the light just falls on the pupil. Your eyes, sir, are changing as fast as the skin of a chameleon; you know they are green: your eyes, if you remember, are green, Master Rodolph."

"Yes, yes!" agreed the intendant, almost unable to articulate.

"They were green, rather," continued Essper George; "and now they are crimson; and now they are a whitish brown: and now they are as black as a first day's mourning!"

"Alack—and alack-a-day! it has come at last," exclaimed Master Rodolph in a voice of great terror. "We have blindness in our family, if I remember right; if indeed I can remember any thing at this awful moment, and my mind has not left me as well as my eyesight; we have blindness in our family. There was my uncle, Black Hundrich the trooper, the father of that graceless varlet who lives with his lordship of Schoos Johannisberger, whom never shall I see again. What would I now give for one glimpse at his nose! There is blindness in our family!" continued Master Rodolph, weeping very bitterly; "blindness in our family! Black Hundrich the trooper, the father of that graceless varlet, my good uncle Black Hundrich, what would he now say to see his dearly beloved nephew, the offspring of his excellent sister, my good mother, to whom he was much affected,—what would he say now, were he to see his dearly beloved nephew in this sad and pitiable condition! Weep for me, my friends!—weep and grieve! How often has my dear uncle Hundrich the trooper, how often has he dandled me on his knee! There is blindness in our family," continued the poor intendant. "Black Hundrich the trooper, my uncle, my dearly beloved uncle, kind Hundrich, who was much affected to me. How much I repent at this sad hour, the many wicked tricks I have played upon my dear uncle! Take example by me, dear friends! I would give my place's worth that I had not set fire to my dear uncle's pig-tail; and it sits heavy on my heart at this dark moment, the thought that in privacy and behind his back, I was wickedly accustomed to call him *Shugface*. A kind man was Black Hundrich the trooper! His eyes were put out by a pike, fighting against his own party by mistake in the dark—there was always blindness in our family!"

Here Master Rodolph was so overcome by his misfortune, that he ceased to speak, and began to moan very piteously; Essper George was not less affected, and sobbed bitterly; Mr. Speigeburg

aned; Little Lintz whimpered. Essper at length broke silence.

"I have been many trades, and learned many things in my life," said he, with a very subdued voice; "and I am not altogether ignorant of the anatomy of our visual nerves. I will essay, good Master Rodolph, my dear friend, my much-beloved friend. I will essay and examine, whether some elements of a skill once not altogether inglorious, may not produce benefit unto thy good person. I will essay, my dear Mr. Speigelburg; and thou, little Mr. Lintz, compose thyself. We cannot control fate; we are not the masters of our destiny. Terrible is this visitation; but it becomes us to conduct ourselves like men; to struggle against misfortune; and verily to do our best to counteract evil. Good Mr. Speigelburg, do thou stand up and support the head of our much-valued friend; and thou kind and little Mr. Lintz, arrange the light, so that it fall full upon his face. (Here Essper, overpowered by grief, paused for a moment.) Well placed, Mr. Lintz! exceedingly well placed! I yet a little more to the right. Now I will examine these dear eyes. So saying, Essper, groping his way round Mr. Speigelburg's chair, reached Master Rodolph. "There is hope," continued after a pause of a few minutes: "hope for our much-beloved friend. It is not a cataract, and methinks that the sight is not lost. The attack," continued Essper, in a tone of confident pomposity, "the attack is either bilious or nervous. From the our of our friend's eyes, I at first imagined that was a sudden rush of bile; but on examining more minutely, I am inclined to think otherwise. Give me thy pulse, Master Rodolph! Hum! nervous, I think. Show me thy tongue, good Master Rodolph.—Hum! very nervous! Does that affect your breath?" asked Essper, as he gave the lusty intendant a stout thrust in the paunch. Does that affect thy breath, beloved friend!"

"In truth," answered Master Rodolph, but with at difficulty, for he gasped for breath from the effects of the punch; "in truth it very much affects me."

"Hum! decidedly nervous!" said Essper George; and a little on the lungs—the nerves of the lungs fully touched: indeed your whole nervous system is disarranged. Fear not, my good friend, I perfectly understand your case. We will soon cure you. The first thing to be done, is to apply the use of a simple, but very peculiar nature,—the ret was taught me by a Portuguese—and then I will bind your eyes up."

Essper now dipped his handkerchief in water, and then bandaged Master Rodolph's eyes with it very tightly. When he had decidedly ascertained that the intendant's sight was completely suppressed, he sought his way to the door with becoming caution, and soon re-entered the room with a lamp. The extinguished candles were immediately relit. Master Rodolph continued the whole time moaning without ceasing. "Alack-a-day—and alack, it it should come to this! O! Burgundy is a fine wine! Often have I said to myself that I would never dry another bottle of Burgundy. Why have I deserted, like an ungrateful traitor, my own countrypatriots! Alack-a-day, and alack! the whole world will now go to ruin! Tall Halbert will say he is back in his accounts; and as for that scoundrel Vienna bottle-merchant, he will ever be waiting me in the exchanges. Much faith have I

in thee, good Essper—truly much faith. Thy skill is great, and also thy kindness, good Mr. Speigelburg;—and thou too, my little friend; never more shall I see thy pleasing views of this fair town!"

"Now, Mr. Speigelburg," said Essper, "and thou also, kind Mr. Lintz, assist me in moving away the table, and in placing our dearly beloved and much-afflicted friend in the centre of the room; so that we may all of us have a fair opportunity of witnessing the progress or alteration of his disorder, the shifting of the symptoms, and indeed the general appearance of the case."

They accordingly placed Master Rodolph, who was seated in his large easy chair, in the very centre of the room.

"How feel you now, dear friend!" asked Essper George.

"In truth, very low in spirits, but confiding much in thy skill, good Essper. Hast thou hope, I pray thee, tell me, or recommendest thou that I should send for some learned professor of this city? Methinks in the multitude of counsellors there is wisdom!"

"Yes! and in the multitude of fees there is ruin. I tell thee, much-loved Master Rodolph, that I undertake thy cure—fear not—and thy purse shall suffer as little as thy body. But I must find in thee a ready, satisfied, tractable, and confiding patient. The propriety of my directions must not be questioned, and my instructions must be strictly obeyed."

"In truth, thou hast only to command, good Essper, but might I not part with this bandage? Methinks thy lotion, simple as thou dost profess it to be, has already produced very marvellous effects; and I already feel my sight, as it were, struggling through the folds of this linen cincture."

"Take off that bandage," said Essper, "and you are stone blind for life!"

"Alack-a-day!" exclaimed Master Rodolph; "how awful! In truth, there is blindness in our family. Black Hunsdrich, the trooper—"

"Silence!" said the physician; "I must seal your mouth for the present."

"Alack-a-day!" said Master Rodolph; "in truth, without conversation, life appears to me like a prince without a steward!"

"Hush! hush!" again exclaimed Essper; "your attack, good Rodolph, is decidedly nervous, and your cure must be effected by causing an instantaneous reaction of your whole system." Here Essper whispered to Mr. Speigelburg, who immediately quitted the room. "You are perhaps not aware," continued Essper, "of the intimate connexion which exists in the human frame, between the pupils of the eyes and the calves of the legs?"

"Alack-a-day!" exclaimed the simple intendant.

"Silence! silence! you must listen, not answer: now," continued he, "the attack in your eyes, good Rodolph, has been occasioned by a sort of cramp in your legs; and, before any of my remedies can produce an effect upon you, a prior effect must be produced by yourself upon the dormant nerves of the calves of your legs. This must be produced also by manual friction before a large fire." This fire was now being lighted by Mr. Lintz, under Essper's directions.

"Alack-a-day!" again burst forth Master Rodolph.

"Silence! silence!"

"I tell you, good Essper, I cannot be silent; I must speak, if I be blind for it my whole life. I rub the calves of my legs! I tell you it would be an easier task for me to rub the grand-duke's or Madame Carolina's. I rub the calves of my legs! Why, my dear Essper, I cannot even reach them. It was only last Wednesday, that walking through the Great Square, I saw his excellency approaching me, when my shoe-string was most unluckily untied. There was no idle boy near to help me, and from the greatness of the exertion, I sank down upon a step. Much fear I that my good prince credited that I had smelt the wine cup before dinner. In truth, I think I must again betake myself to buckles. I rub my calves, indeed! Impossible, my dear Essper!"

"Choose, then, between a little temporary inconvenience and eternal blindness. I pledge myself to cure you, but it must be by my own remedies. Implicit obedience on your part is the condition of your cure: decide at once!"

"If then it must be so," said Master Rodolph, in a very doleful voice; "if then it must be so, I must even obey thee. Pray for me, my good friends, I am much afflicted. Awful is this visitation—and great this fatigue!"

In truth the fatigue was great. Imagine an unwieldy being like Master Rodolph, stooping down before a blazing fire, and rubbing his calves with unceasing rapidity; Essper George standing over him, and preventing him, by constant threats and ever ready admonitions, from flagging in the slightest degree from his indispensable exertions. Poor Master Rodolph! how he puffed, and panted, sighed, and sobbed, and groaned! what rivers of perspiration, coursed down his ample countenance! But in the midst of his agony, this faithful steward, never, for one moment, ceased deploring the anticipated perulations of tall Halbert, and the certain cheatery of the Vienna merchant.

While he was in this condition, and thus active, Mr. Speigelburg returned; and it was with difficulty that the little man could suppress his laughter, when he witnessed his simple host performing this singular ceremony, and making these unusual and almost impossible exertions. Nor was he assisted in his painful struggle to stifle his indecent mirth, by his eyes lighting on Little Lintz, who was blowing the fire with unparalleled vigour, and raising his eyes to heaven with increasing wonder at Essper George, who stood opposite Master Rodolph, lolling out his great red tongue at him, winking his eyes, twisting his nose, and distorting his countenance into the most original grimaces. Mr. Speigelburg brought some cigars, and a large jar of hot water. The cigars were immediately lighted, and one placed in each side of Master Rodolph's mouth; tobacco, according to Essper, being a fine stimulant. Little Lintz was set to trim them, and every five minutes he shook off the gray ashes. Master Rodolph was never allowed for a moment to cease exciting the dormant nerves of the calves of his legs.

The clock struck eleven.

"All the symptoms, I am happy to say," observed Essper, "are good. I have no hesitation in declaring that it is my firm conviction, that our much-valued friend will be reinstated in the possession of one of the greatest blessings of life. Before midnight, I calculate, if he be wise enough to obey all my directions, that he will find his sight restored."

"I shall die first," said Master Rodolph, in a very faint voice; "I feel sinking every moment; adieu my dear friends! Little did I think this jovial afternoon, that it would end in this. Adieu!"

"We cannot think of quitting you, dearest Master Rodolph!" said Essper. "Do not despair exert yourself, I beseech you: and never cease from exciting the dormant nerves of your calves until it strike twelve o'clock. The reaction will then have taken place; but mind you rub low good Rodolph: reach well down; you cannot rub too low. I stake my reputation upon your cure. Think of this, and do not despair. Shave the cigar, and mend the fire, Little Lintz; and now good Mr. Speigelburg, it is time for the last remedy. And then, my good friends, the most profound silence. Not a word from either of you; you must not even answer a single question."

Mr. Speigelburg wanted no fresh instructions, and a stream of warm water was poured down the nape of poor Master Rodolph's neck, with the continuity of a cataract, so that the good steward at last fairly thought that he was born to be drowned. When the great jar was emptied, the confederates sat down to boston; the patient, the whole time, continuing his exertions, though almost exhausted, and having no idea that he was not unceasingly watched by his gifted physician and faithful nurses.

At length Essper rose, and again felt Master Rodolph's pulse. "The important moment is at hand, my dear friend," said he; "and I rejoice to say that the symptoms could not be better. Your pulse has recovered, your nerves are rebraced. There!" he cried, jerking off the bandage.

Master Rodolph gave a loud shout, and in spite of his previous exertions, and without speaking a syllable, jumped upon his legs, and began dancing and hallooing with the most ungoverned enthusiasm. He would have stood upon his head, had not Essper George prevented him: but the interference of his physician called him a little to himself, and he embraced his preserver without mercy. Truly that affectionate hug of Master Rodolph, revenged all his previous suffering! The good intendant was fairly beside himself. He gave Mr. Speigelburg such a joyous slap on his back, that the court suit suffered more in that one moment, than it had for years; and as for Little Lintz, he insisted upon putting him in the empty jar. The dwarf ran round the room for his life; and would decidedly have been potted, had it not been for the stout interference of Mr. Speigelburg. The little man ended by dancing in a circle, hand-in-hand: no one kicked his heels about with greater spirit than Master Rodolph, and supper was immediately ordered to celebrate his miraculous recovery.

CHAPTER VIII.

VIVIAN quitted the Von Spittergens with regret, and with the promise of a speedy return. He would gladly indeed have lengthened his stay to the present moment, but a fête which was to be given this evening by his excellency the grand marshal, rendered his return necessary.

After dining with the doctor and his interesting daughter, Vivian mounted Max, and took one

return to the city by a cross-road. He met Emilius von Aslingen in his ride through the gardens. As that distinguished personage at present patronised the English nation, and astounded the Reisenberg natives by driving an English mail, with English horses, and ruling English grooms, he condescended to be exceedingly polite to our hero, whom he had publicly declared at the soiree of the preceding night, to be "a very bearable being." Such a character from such a man, raised Vivian even more in the estimation of the Reisenberg world, than his flattering reception by the grand-uke, and his cordial greeting by Madame Carolina.

"Shall you be at his excellency the grand-marshal's to-night?" asked Vivian.

"Who is he?" inquired Mr. Emilius von Aslingen; "ah! that is the new man—the man who is mediatized, is not it?"

"The Prince of Little Lilliput, I mean."

"Yes!" drawled out Mr. von Aslingen; "a baron who lived in a castle in a wood. I shall go I have courage enough; but they say his servants are skins, and he has got a tail. Good morning you! I believe he is your friend."

The ball-room was splendidly illuminated. Vivian never recollected witnessing a more brilliant scene. The whole of the royal family was present, and did honour to their new officer of state. His royal highness was all smiles, and his consort all umonds. Stars and uniforms, ribands and orders surrounded. All the diplomatic characters wore the finest state dresses of their respective courts. Emilius von Aslingen having given out in the evening, that he should appear as a captain in the Royal Guards, all the young lords and fops of fashion were consequently ultra militaires. They were not a little annoyed when, late in the evening, their model lounged in, wearing a rich scarlet uniform of a knight of Malta; of which newly-vised order, Von Aslingen, who had served half campaign against the Turks, was a member.

The royal family had arrived only a few minutes: dancing had not yet commenced. Vivian was at the top of the room, honoured by the notice of Madame Carolina, who complained of his yesterday's absence from the palace. Suddenly the universal hum and buzz, which are always sound in a crowded room, were stilled; and all present, arrested in their conversation and pursuits, stood with their heads turned towards the great door. Thither also Vivian looked, and wondered, beheld—Mr. Beckendorff. His singular appearance, for, with the exception of his cavalry uniform, he presented the same figure as when he had come forward to receive the Prince of Little Lilliput and Vivian on the lawn, immediately attracted universal attention: but in this crowded room, there were a few who, either from actual experience, or accurate information, were not ignorant that this personage was the prime minister.

The report spread like wildfire. Even the tulle of a German ball-room, honoured as it was by the presence of the court, was no restraint to the curiosity and wonder of all present. Yes! Mr. Emilius von Aslingen raised his glass to his eyes, and then, shrugging his shoulders,—his eyes heaven! But great as was Vivian's astonishment, it was not only occasioned by this unexpected appearance of his former host. Mr. Beckendorff was not alone: a female was leaning on

his left arm. A quick glance in a moment convinced Vivian, that she was not the original of the mysterious picture. The companion of Beckendorff was very young. Her full voluptuous growth gave you, for a moment, the impression that she was somewhat low in stature; but it was only for a moment, for the lady was by no means short. Her beauty it is impossible to describe. It was of a kind that baffles all phrases, nor have I a single simile at command, to make it more clear, or more confused. Her luxurious form, her blonde complexion, her silken hair, would have all become the languishing sultana; but then her eyes,—they banished all idea of the seraglio, and were the most decidedly European, though the most brilliant, that ever glanced: eagles might have proved their young at them. To a countenance which otherwise would have been calm, and perhaps pensive, they gave an expression of extreme vivacity and unusual animation, and perhaps of restlessness and arrogance—it might have been courage. The lady was dressed in the costume of a chanoinesse of a *convent des dames nobles*; an institution to which Protestant and Catholic ladies are alike admitted. The orange-coloured cordon of her canonry, was slung gracefully over her plain black silk dress, and a diamond cross hung below her waist.

Mr. Beckendorff and his fair companion were instantly welcomed by the grand-marshal; and Arnheim, and half a dozen chamberlains, all in new uniforms and extremely agitated, did their utmost, by their exertions, in clearing the way, to prevent the prime minister of Reisenberg from paying his respects to his sovereign. At length, however, Mr. Beckendorff reached the top of the room, and presented the young lady to his royal highness, and also to Madame Carolina. Vivian had retired on their approach, and now found himself among a set of young officers—idolaters of Von Aslingen, and of white hats lined with crimson. "Who can she be?" was the universal question. Though all by the query acknowledged their ignorance, yet it is singular that, at the same time, every one was prepared with a response to it. Such are the sources of accurate information!

"And that is Beckendorff, is it?" exclaimed the young Count of Eberstein: "and his daughter of course! Well! there is nothing like being a plebeian and a prime minister! I suppose Beckendorff will bring an anonymous friend to court next."

"She cannot be his daughter," said Bernstorff. "To be a chanoinesse of that order, remember she must be noble."

"Then she must be his niece," answered the young Count of Eberstein. "I think I do remember some confused story about a sister of Beckendorff, who ran away with some Wirtemberg baron. What was that story, Gernsbach?"

"No, it was not his sister," said the Baron of Gernsbach; "it was his aunt, I think."

"Beckendorff's aunt, what an idea! as if he ever had an aunt! Men of his calibre make themselves out of mud. They have no relations. Well, never mind: there was some story, I am sure, about some woman or other. Depend upon it, that this girl is the child of that woman; whether she be aunt, niece, or daughter. I shall go and tell every one that I know the whole business; this girl is the daughter of some woman or other."—So

saying, away walked the young Count of Eberstein, to disseminate in all directions the important conclusion to which his logical head had allowed him to arrive.

"Von Weinbren," said the Baron of Gernsbach, "how can you account for this mysterious appearance of the premier?"

"O! when men are on the decline, they do desperate things. I suppose it is to please the renegade."

"Hush! there's the Englishman behind you."

"On dit, another child of Beckendorff."

"O no!—secret mission."

"Ah! indeed."

"Here comes Von Aslingen! Well, great Emilius! how solve you this mystery?"

"What mystery? Is there one?"

"I allude to this wonderful appearance of Beckendorff."

"Beckendorff! what a name! who is he?"

"Nonsense! the premier."

"Well!"

"You have seen him of course; he is here. Have you just come in?"

"Beckendorff here!" said Von Aslingen, in a tone of affected horror; "I did not know that the fellow was to be visited. It is all over with Reisenberg. I shall go to Vienna to-morrow."

But hark! the sprightly music calls to the dance: and first the stately Polonaise, an easy gradation between walking and dancing. To the surprise of the whole room, and the indignation of many of the high nobles, the Crown-prince of Reisenberg led off the Polonaise with the unknown fair one. Such an attention to Beckendorff was a distressing proof of present power and favour. The Polonaise is a dignified promenade, with which German balls invariably commence. The cavaliers, with an air of studied grace, offer their right hands to their fair partners; and the whole party, in a long file, accurately follow the leading couple through all their scientific evolutions, as they wind through every part of the room. Waltzes in sets speedily followed the Polonaise; and the unknown, who was now an object of universal attention, danced with Count von Sohnspeer—another of Beckendorff's numerous progeny, if the reader remember. How scurvily are poor single gentlemen, who live alone, treated by the candid tongues of their fellow-creatures! The commander-in-chief of the Reisenberg troops was certainly a partner of a very different complexion to the young lady's previous one. The crown-prince had undertaken his duty with reluctance, and had performed it without grace: not a single word had he exchanged with his partner during the promenade; and his genuine listlessness was even more offensive than affected apathy. Von Sohnspeer, on the contrary, danced in the true Vienna style, and whirled like a dervish. All our good English prejudices against the soft, the swimming, the sentimental, melting, undulating, dangerous waltz, would quickly disappear, if we only executed the dreaded manœuvres in the true Austrian style. As for myself, far from trembling for any of my daughters, although I particularly pride myself upon my character as a father, far from trembling for any of my daughters while joining in the whirling waltz, I should as soon expect them to get sentimental in a swing.

Vivian did not choose to presume upon his late acquaintance with Mr. Beckendorff, as it had not

been sought by that gentleman, and he did not pay his respects to the mir Beckendorff continued at the top of standing between the state chairs of highness and Madame Carolina, and addressing an observation to his sovereign, answering one of the lady's. Had Beckendorff been in the habit of attending his he could not have exhibited more performance. There he stood, with his arm behind him, his chin resting on his breast, raised eyes glancing!

"My dear prince," said Vivian to marshal, "you are just the person I speak to. How came you to invite Beckendorff and how came he to accept the invitation?"

"My dear friend," said his highness his shoulders, "wonders will never cease invited him; I should just as soon have invited old Schoss Johannsberger."

"Were not you aware, then, of his influence?"

"Not the least! you should rather say for I assure you, I consider it a most painful thing. It is quite astonishing, my dear friend, to see that man's character. He really is most gentlemanly, polite, and excellent; I know: no more mad than you are! his power being on the decline, we know the sense of that!"

"Better than most persons, I suspect of course is not here!"

"No! you have heard about him, I see."

"Heard!—heard what?"

"Not heard! well—he told me yesterday said he was going to call upon you did you know?"

"Know what?"

"He is a very sensible man, Sievers: very glad at last that he is likely to succeed in the world. All men have their little imprudence; he was a little too hot once. What of it? has come to his senses—so have I; and will never lose yours."

"But pray, my dear prince, tell me happened to Sievers."

"He is going to Vienna immediately; he will be very useful there, I have no doubt. It is a very good place, and I am sure he will do his duty. They cannot have an abler man."

"Vienna! well—that is the last world in which I should expect to find him. What place can he have?—and what can he perform there?"

"Many! he is to be the editor of the Observer, and censor of the Austrian thought he would do well at last. All their imprudent day. I had. I am now—I must go and speak to the Countess."

As Vivian was doubting whether he should grieve or laugh, at this singular termination of Sievers' career, his arm was suddenly on turning round, he found it was by Beckendorff.

"There is another very strong argument said the minister, without any of the usual recognition; "there is another very strong argument against your doctrine of despotism," then Mr. Beckendorff, taking Vivian by the arm, began walking up and down part of the room with him; and, in a few minutes, quite

the scene of the discussion, he was involved in the most metaphysical. This incident created another great sensation, and whispers of "secret mission—secretary of state—decidedly a son," &c. &c. were in an instant afloat in all parts of the room.

The approach of his royal highness extricated Vivian from an argument, which was as profound as it was interminable; and as Mr. Beckendorff retired with the grand-duke into a recess in the library, Vivian was requested by Van Neuweid to attend his excellency the grand-marshal.

"My dear friend," said the prince, "I saw you king with a certain person; now, is he not what a call a proper man,—gentlemanly, polite, and exceedingly attentive? I did not say any thing to you when I passed you before; but to tell you the truth now, I was a little annoyed that he had not spoken to you. I knew you were as proud as Lucifer, and would not salute him yourself; and between ourselves, I had no great wish you should; not to conceal it, he did not even mention your name. But the reason of this, is now quite evident, and you must confess he is remarkably attentive. You know, if you remember, we thought of incognito was a little affected—rather annoying, if you recollect. I remember in the green room, you gave him a gentle cut about it: you have not forgot you told me, perhaps! It was very kind of you, very spirited, and I dare say, did good. Well!—what I was going to say about that, is this,—I dare say now, after all," continued his excellency, with a very knowing look, "a certain reason had very good reasons for that: not that he ever told them to me, nor that I have the slightest share of them; but when a person is really so exceedingly polite and attentive, I always think he could never do any thing disagreeable without a cause,—and it was exceedingly disagreeable, if you remember, my dear friend. I never knew to whom he was speaking. Von Philipson indeed! hah! hah! hah! when one does remember certain things in one's life—hah! hah! hah! eh, Grey?—you remember that cucumber? and Owlface, ah! hah! hah! hah! and Madame Clara, eh! Well! we did not think, the day we were floundering down that turf road, that it would end in this. Grand-marshal! rather a more brilliant scene than the Giants' Hall at Turripurva, I think, eh?—ah! hah! hah! But all men have their imprudent days; the best way is to forget them. There are poor Sievers; who ever did more imprudent things than he! and now it is very likely he will do very well in the world, eh! Well! there is no need to talking so. What I want of you, my dear fellow, is this. There is that girl who came with Beckendorff: who the deuce she is, I don't know: let us hope the best! We must pay her every attention. I dare say she is his daughter. You have not forgotten the portrait, I dare say. Well! all were gay once, you know, Grey. All men have their imprudent day;—why should not Beckendorff?—speaks rather in his favour, I think. Well, this girl, you know;—his royal highness very kindly made the crown-prince walk the Polonaise with her—very kind of him, and very proper. That attention can be too great for the daughter friend of such a man!—a man who, in two words, may be said to have made Reisenberg. For at was Reisenberg before Beckendorff? Ah! at! Perhaps we were happier then, after all;

and then there was no royal highness to bow to; no person to be condescending, except ourselves. But never mind! we'll forget. After all, this life has its charms. What a brilliant scene! but I ramble so—this girl—every attention should be paid her, of course. The crown-prince was so kind as to walk the Polonaise with her;—and Von Sohnspeer—he is a brute, to be sure; but then he is a field-marshal. I did not know, till to-day, that in public processions the grand-marshal takes precedence of the field-marshal! That is, I walk before Von Sohnspeer: and what is more just!—precisely as it should be. Ah! I never shall come to the point—this girl—every attention should be paid her; and I think, considering what has taken place between Beckendorff and yourself, and the very polite, and marked, and flattering, and particularly attentive manner in which he recognised you,—I think, that after all this, and considering every thing, the etiquette is for you, my dear Grey, particularly as you are a foreigner, and my personal friend—indeed my most particular friend, for in fact I owe every thing to you—my life, and more than my life,—I think, I repeat, considering all this, that the least you can do, is to ask her to dance with you; and I, as the host, will introduce you. I am sorry, my dear friend," continued his excellency, with a look of great regret, "to introduce you to —; but we will not speak about it. We have no right to complain of Mr. Beckendorff. No person could possibly behave to us in a manner more polite, and gentlemanly, and attentive."

After an introductory speech, in his excellency's happiest manner, and in which a eulogium of Vivian, and a compliment to the fair unknown, got almost as completely entangled as the origin of slavery and the history of the feudal system, in his more celebrated harangue, Vivian found himself waltzing with the anonymous beauty. The grand-marshal, during the process of introduction, had given the young lady every opportunity of declaring her name; but every opportunity was thrown away. "She must be incog," whispered his excellency: "*Miss von Philipson*, I suppose!"

Vivian was extremely desirous of discovering the nature of the relationship or connection between Beckendorff and his partner. The rapid waltz allowed no pause for conversation; but, after the dance, Vivian seated himself at her side, with the determination of not very quickly deserting it. The lady did not even allow him the satisfaction of commencing the conversation; for no sooner was she seated, than she begged to know who the person was with whom she had previously waltzed. The history of Count von Sohnspeer exceedingly amused her; and no sooner had Vivian finished his anecdote, than the lady said, "Ah! I see you are an amusing person. Now tell me the history of everybody in the room."

"Really," said Vivian, "I fear I shall forfeit my reputation of being amusing very speedily; for I am almost as great a stranger at this court as you appear to be yourself! Count von Sohnspeer is too celebrated a personage at Reisenberg, to have allowed even me to be long ignorant of his history; and, as for the rest, as far as I can judge, they are most of them as obscure as myself, and not nearly as interesting as you are!"

"Are you an Englishman?" asked the lady.

"I am."

"I supposed so, both from your travelling and your appearance: I think the English countenance is very peculiar."

"Indeed! we do not flatter ourselves so at home."

"Yes! it is peculiar," said the lady, in a tone which seemed to imply that contradiction was unusual; "and I think that you are all handsome! I admire the English, which in this part of the world is singular; in the south, you know, we are generally francisé."

"I am well aware of that," said Vivian. "There, for instance," pointing to a very pompous-looking personage, who at that moment strutted by; "there, for instance, is the most francisé person in all Reisenberg! that is our grand-chamberlain. He considers himself a most felicitous copy of Louis the Fourteenth! He allows nothing in his opinions and phrases but what is orthodox. As it generally happens in such cases, his orthodoxy is rather obsolete!"

"Who is that Knight of Malta?" asked the lady.

"The most powerful individual in the room," answered Vivian.

"Who can he be?" asked the lady with eagerness.

"Behold him, and tremble!" rejoined Vivian: "for with him it rests to decide, whether you are civilized or a savage; whether you are to be abhorred or admired; idolized or despised. Nay, do not be alarmed! there are a few heretics even in Reisenberg, who, like myself, value from conviction, and not from fashion; and who will be ever ready, in case of a Von Aslingen anathema, to evince our admiration where it is due."

The lady pleaded fatigue, as an excuse for not again dancing; and Vivian, of course, did not quit her side. Her lively remarks, piquant observations, and very singular questions, highly amused him; and he was equally flattered by the evident gratification which his conversation afforded her. It was chiefly of the principal members of the court that she spoke: she was delighted with Vivian's glowing character of Madame Carolina, whom she had this evening seen for the first time. Who this unknown could be, was a question which often occurred to him; and the singularity of a man like Beckendorff, suddenly breaking through his habits, and outraging the whole system of his existence, to please a daughter, or niece, or female cousin, did not fail to strike him.

"I have the honour of being acquainted with Mr. Beckendorff," said Vivian. This was the first time that the minister's name had been mentioned.

"I perceived you talking with him," was the answer.

"You are staying, I suppose, at Mr. Beckendorff's?"

"Not at present."

"You have, of course, been at his retreat—delightful place!"

"Very elegant!"

"Are you an ornithologist?" asked Vivian, smiling.

"Not at all scientific; but I, of course, can now tell a lory from a Java sparrow—and a bulfinch from a canary. The first day I was there, I never shall forget the surprise I experienced, when, after the noon meal being finished, the aviary door was opened. After that I always let the creatures out

myself; and one day I opened all the cages at once. If you could but have witnessed the scene! I am sure you would have been quite delighted with it. As for poor Mr. Beckendorff, I thought even he would have gone out of his mind; and when I brought in the white peacock, he actually left the room in despair. Pray how do you like Madame Clara, and Owlface, too? Which do you think the most beautiful? I am no great favourite with the old lady. Indeed, it was very kind of Mr. Beckendorff to bear with every thing as he did: I am sure he is not much used to lady visitors."

"I trust that your visit to him will not be very short?"

"My stay at Reisenberg will not be very long," said the young lady, with rather a grave countenance. "Have you been here any time?"

"About a fortnight: it was a mere chance my coming at all. I was going on straight to Vienna."

"To Vienna! indeed! Well, I am glad you did not miss Reisenberg: you must not quit it now. You know that this is not the Vienna season!"

"I am aware of it; but I am such a restless person, that I never regulate my movements by those of other people."

"But surely you find Reisenberg very agreeable?"

"Very much so; but I am a confirmed wanderer."

"Why are you?" asked the lady, with great naïveté.

Vivian looked grave; and the lady, as if she was sensible of having unintentionally occasioned him a painful recollection, again expressed a wish that he should not immediately quit the court, and trusted that circumstances would not prevent his acceding to her desire.

"It does not even depend upon circumstances," said Vivian; "the whim of the moment is my only principle of action, and therefore I may be off to-night, or be here a month hence."

"O! pray stay then," said his companion eagerly; "I expect you to stay now. If you could only have an idea what a relief conversing with you is, after having been dragged by the crown-prince, and whirled by that Von Schnapper! Heigho! I could almost sigh at the very remembrance of that doleful Polonaise."

The lady ended with a faint laugh, a sentence which apparently had been commenced in no light vein. She did not cease speaking, but continued to request Vivian to remain at Reisenberg at least as long as herself. Her frequent requests were perfectly unnecessary, for the promise had been pledged at the first hint of her wish; but this was not the only time during the evening, that Vivian had remarked, that his interesting companion occasionally talked without apparently being sensible that she was conversing.

The young Count of Eberstein, who, to use his own phrase, was "sadly involved," and consequently very desirous of being appointed a first councillor, thought that he should secure his appointment by condescending to notice the person whom he delicately styled, "the minister's female relative." To his great mortification and surprise the honour was declined; and "the female relative," being unwilling to dance again, but yet feeling it necessary to break off her conversation

ate partner, it having already lasted a usual time, highly gratified his excellency-marshal by declaring that she would Prince Maximilian. "This, to say the very attentive of Miss von Philipson."

ax, who had just tact enough to discover, he partner of the fair incognita was the hour of the evening, now considered him the most important personage in the fact, he was only second to Emilius von

The evident contest which was ever e between his natural feelings as a boy, quired habits as a courtier, made him a ng companion. He talked of the gardens ra, in a style not unworthy of the young Eberstein. He thought that Madame as as charming as usual to-night; but, rary, that the Countess von S—— was her ill—and this put him in mind of her ew equipage; and then, a propos equi- hat did his companion think of the new he Hungarian harness? His lively and union encouraged the boy's tattle; and l by her good-nature, he soon forgot his eeches, and was quickly rattling on iparva, and his horses, and his dogs, and d his guns, and his grooms. Soon after he lady, taking the arm of the young sed up to Mr. Beckendorff. He received very great attention, and led her to 'arolina, who rose, seated Mr. Becken- nale relative" by her side, and evidently ting extremely agreeable.

ckendorff had been speaking to Von who was now again dancing; and the s standing by himself, in his usual at- quite abstracted. Young Maximilian, d to be very much struck by the minis- ance, continued, after losing his partner, . Beckendorff with a very scrutinizing y degrees he drew nearer and nearer to his examination, sometimes staring at stenseness, and occasionally casting his ground as if he thought he was observed. he had come up quite close to the pro- aiting for an instant until he had caught made a most courteous bow, and said gitated voice, as if he already repented ture, "I think, sir, that you have drop- out of this part of your dress."

young prince pointed with a shaking e part of the breast in Mr. Beckendorff's ere the small piece of flannel waistcoat nade its appearance.

ink so, sir, do you?" said the Prime Reisenberg. "Pray, at what o'clock do ed?"

ve ever seen a barking dog, reached by us lash of some worried equestrian, sud- away; his annoying yell instantaneously d his complacent grin of ludicrous im- anged into a doleful look of unexpected s, you may form some idea of the shuf- y with which the young Prince Maxi- appeared from the presence of Mr. Beck- d the countenance of actual alarm with on sought refuge in another part of the the fright of the moment, the natural the child all returned; and like all children, he sought a friend—he ran to

"I know something!" said the boy.

"What?"

"I'll tell you a secret: you must not say a word though—upon your honour!"

"O, certainly!"

"Put your ear down lower: anybody looking?"

"No, no!"

"Sure nobody can hear?"

"Certainly not!"

"Then I'll tell you what: lean down a little lower—sure nobody is listening?—I—I—I don't like that Mr. Beckendorff!"

CHAPTER IX.

VIVIAN had promised Madame Carolina a second English lesson on the day after the grand-marshal's fête. The great progress which the lady had made, and the great talent which the gentleman had evinced during the first, had rendered madame the most enthusiastic of pupils, and Vivian, in her estimation, the ablest of instructors. Madame Carolina's passion was patronage. To discover concealed merit, to encourage neglected genius, to reveal the mysteries of the world to a novice in mankind; or in short, to make herself very agreeable to any one whom she fancied to be very interesting; was the great business, and the great delight of her existence. No sooner had her eyes lighted on Vivian Grey, than she determined to patronise. His country, his appearance, the romantic manner in which he had become connected with the court, all pleased her lively imagination. She was intuitively acquainted with his whole history, and in an instant he was the hero of a romance, of which the presence of the principal character compensated, we may suppose, for the somewhat indefinite details. His taste, and literary acquirements, completed the spell by which Madame Carolina was willingly enchanted. A low Dutch professor, whose luminous genius rendered unnecessary the ceremony of shaving; and a dumb dwarf, in whose interesting appearance was forgotten its perfect idiotism; a prosy improvisatore, and a South American savage were all superseded on the appearance of Vivian Grey.

As Madame Carolina was, in fact, a very delightful woman, our hero had no objection to humour her harmless foibles; and not contented with making notes in an interlarded copy of her Charlemagne, he even promised to read Haroun Al Raschid in manuscript. The consequence of his courtesy, and the reward of his taste, was unbounded favour. Apartments in the palace were offered him and declined; and when Madame Carolina had become acquainted with sufficient of his real history, to know that, on his part, neither wish nor necessity existed to return immediately to his own country, she tempted him to remain at Reisenberg by an offer of a place at court; and doubtless, had he been willing, Vivian might in time have become a lord chamberlain, or even a field-marshal.

On entering the room, the morning in question, he found Madame Carolina writing. At the end of the apartment, a lady ceased, on his appearance, humming an air to which she was dancing, and at the same time imitating canteata. Madame re-

ceived Vivian with expressions of the greatest delight, saying also, in a very peculiar and confidential manner, that she was just sealing up a package for him, the preface of Haroun; and then she introduced him to "the baroness!" Vivian turned and bowed: the lady who was lately dancing came forward. It was his unknown partner of the preceding night. "The baroness" extended her hand to Vivian, and unaffectedly expressed her great pleasure at seeing him again. Vivian trusted that she was not fatigued by the fête, and asked after Mr. Beckendorff. Madame Carolina was busily engaged at the moment in duly securing the precious preface. The baroness said that Mr. Beckendorff had returned home, but that Madame Carolina had kindly insisted upon staying at the palace. She was not the least wearied. Last night had been one of the most agreeable she had ever spent, at least she supposed she ought to say so: for if she had experienced a tedious or a mournful feeling for a moment, it was hardly for what was then passing, so much for—

"Pray, Mr. Grey," said Madame Carolina, interrupting them, "have you heard about our new ballet?"

"No."

"I do not think you have ever been to our opera. To-morrow is opera night, and you must not be again away. We pride ourselves here very much upon our opera."

"We estimate it even in England," said Vivian, "as possessing perhaps the most perfect orchestra now organized."

"The orchestra is very perfect. His royal highness is such an excellent musician, and he has spared no trouble nor expense in forming it: he has always superintended it himself. But I confess, I admire our ballet department still more. I expect you to be delighted with it. You will perhaps be gratified to know, that the subject of our new splendid ballet, which is to be produced to-morrow, is from a great work of your illustrious poet—my Lord Byron."

"From which of his works?"

"The Corsair. Ah! what a sublime work!—what passion!—what energy!—what knowledge of feminine feeling!—what contrast of character!—what sentiments!—what situations!—O! I wish this was opera night—Gulnare! O! my favourite character—beautiful! beautiful! beautiful! How do you think they will dress her?"

"Are you an admirer of our Byron?" asked Vivian of the baroness.

"I think he is a very handsome man. I once saw him at the carnival at Venice."

"But his works—his grand works! *ma chère petite*," said Madame Carolina, in her sweetest tone; "you have read his works?"

"Not a line," answered the baroness, with great naïveté; "I never saw them."

"O! *pauvre enfant*!" said Madame Carolina; "I will employ you then while you are here."

"I never read," said the baroness; "I cannot bear it. I like poetry and romances, but I like somebody to read to me."

"Very just!" said Madame Carolina; "we can judge with greater accuracy of the merit of a composition, when it reaches our mind merely through the medium of the human voice. The soul is an essence,—invisible and indivisible. In this respect the voice of man resembles the principle of his ex-

istence; since few will deny, though there are some materialists who will deny every thing, that the human voice is both impalpable and audible only in one place at the same time. Hence, I ask, is it illogical to infer its indivisibility? The soul and the voice, then, are similar in two great attributes; there is a secret harmony in their spiritual construction. In the earliest ages of mankind a beautiful tradition was afloat, that the soul and the voice were one and the same. We may perhaps recognise in this fanciful belief, the effect of the fascinating and imaginative philosophy of the East; that mysterious portion of the globe," continued Madame Carolina with renewed energy, "from which we should frankly confess that we derive every thing: for the South is but the pupil of the East, through the mediation of Egypt. Of this opinion," said madame with increased fervour, "I have no doubt: of this opinion," continued the lady with additional enthusiasm, "I have boldly avowed myself a votary in a dissertation appended to the second volume of Haroun: for this opinion I would die at the stake! O, lovely East! Why was I not oriental! Land where the voice of the nightingale is never mute! Land of the cedar and the citron, the turtle and the myrtle—of ever-blooming flowers, and ever-shining skies! Illustrious East! Cradle of philosophy! O, my dearest baroness, why do not you feel as I do! From the East we obtain every thing!"

"Indeed!" said the baroness, with great simplicity; "I thought we only got Cachemere shawls."

This puzzling answer was only noticed by Vivian; for the truth is, Madame Carolina was one of those individuals who never attended to any person's answer. Always thinking of herself, she only asked questions that herself might supply the responses. And now having made, as she flattered herself, a very splendid display to her favourite critic, she began to consider what had given rise to her oration. Lord Byron and the ballet again occurred to her; and as the baroness, at least, was not unwilling to listen, and as she herself had no manuscript of her own which she particularly wished to be perused, she proposed that Vivian should read to them part of the Corsair, and in the original tongue. Madame Carolina opened the volume at the first prison scene between Gulnare and Conrad. It was her favourite. Vivian read with care and feeling. Madame was in rapture, and the baroness, although she did not understand a single syllable, seemed almost equally delighted. At length Vivian came to this passage—

"My love stern Seyd's! O—no—no—not my love!
Yet such this heart, that strives no more, once aware
To meet his passions—but it would not be.
I felt—I feel—love dwells with—with the free—
I am a slave, a favour'd slave at best,
To share his splendour, and seem very bliss!
Oft must my soul the question undergo,
Of—"Dost thou love?" and burn to answer "No!"
O! hard it is that fondness to sustain,
And struggle not to feel averse in vain;
But harder still the heart's recoil to bear
And hide from one—perhaps another there—
He takes the hand I give not nor withhold—
Its pulse not check'd—nor quicken'd—calmly cold:
And when resign'd, it drops a lifeless weight
From one I never loved enough to hate.
No warmth these life return by his imprint,
And chill'd remembrance shudders o'er the rust.
Yes—had I ever prov'd that passion's zeal,
The change to hatred were at least to feel:
But still—he goes unmourn'd—returns unsought—
And oft when present—absent from my thought.
Or when rejection comes, and comes it must—
I fear that henceforth 'twill but bring disgust;
I am a slave—but, in despite of pride,
"Twere worse than bondage to become his bride."

"O! how superb!" said madame, in a voice of enthusiasm; "how true! what passion! what energy! what sentiment! what knowledge of feminine feeling! Read it again, I pray; it is my favourite passage."

"What is this passage about?" asked the baroness with great anxiety; "tell me!"

"I have a French translation, *ma mignonne*," said madame; "you shall have it afterwards."

"No! I detest reading," said the young lady, with a very imperious air; "translate it to me at once."

"You are rather a self-willed, petted, little beauty!" thought Vivian; "but your eyes are so brilliant that nothing must be refused you!" and so he did translate it.

On its conclusion, madame was again in raptures. The baroness was not less affected, but she did nothing. She appeared extremely agitated; she changed colour—raised her beautiful eyes with an expression of great sorrow—looked at Vivian very earnestly, and then walked to the other room. In a few moments she returned to her seat.

"I wish you would tell me the story," she said, with great earnestness.

"I have a French translation, *ma belle*!" said madame Carolina; "at present I wish to trouble Mr. Grey with a few questions." Madame Carolina drew Vivian into a recess.

"I am sorry we are troubled with this sweet little savage; but I think she has talent, though evidently quite uneducated. We must do what we can for her. Her total ignorance of all breeding is amusing, but then I think she has a natural elegance. We shall soon polish her. His royal highness is so anxious that every attention should be paid to her. Beckendorff, you know, is a man of the greatest genius. [Madame Carolina had never heard her tone about the minister since the Prince of Little Lilliput's apostasy.] The country is greatly indebted to him. This, between ourselves, is his daughter. At least I have no doubt of it. Beckendorff was once married—to a lady of great rank—died early—beautiful woman—very interesting! His royal highness had a great regard for her. The premier, in his bereavement, turned humorist, and has brought up this lovely girl in the blindest possible manner—nobody knows where. Now, that he finds it necessary to bring her forward, he, of course, is quite at a loss. His royal highness has applied to me. There was a little oldness before, between the minister and myself. It is now quite removed. I must do what I can for her. I think she must marry Von Solinspeer, who is no more Beckendorff's son than you are—or young Eberstein—or young Bernstorff—or young Gernsbach. We must do something for her. I offered her last night to Emilus von Aslinx; but he said, that unfortunately he was just importing a savage or two of his own from the Brazils, and consequently was not in want of her."

A chamberlain now entered, to announce the speedy arrival of his royal highness. The baroness, without ceremony, expressed her great regret that he was coming, as now she should not hear the wished-for story. Madame Carolina reproved her, and the reproach was endured rather than submitted to.

His royal highness entered, and was accompanied by the crown prince. He greeted the young lady with great kindness; and even the crown prince,

inspired by his father's unusual warmth, made a shuffling kind of bow and a stuttering kind of speech. Vivian was about to retire on the entrance of the grand-duke; but Madame Carolina prevented him, and his royal highness turning round, very graciously seconded her desire, and added that Mr. Grey was the very gentleman with whom he was desirous of meeting.

"I am anxious," said he to Vivian, in rather a low tone, "to make Reisenberg agreeable to Mr. Beckendorff's fair friend. As you are one of the few who are honoured by his intimacy, and are familiar with some of our state secrets," added the grand-duke with a smile; "I am sure it will give you pleasure to assist me in the execution of my wishes."

His royal highness proposed that the ladies should ride; and he himself, with the crown prince and Mr. Grey, would attend them. Madame Carolina expressed her willingness; but the baroness, like all forward girls, unused to the world, suddenly grew at the same time both timid and disobliging. She looked sullen and discontented, and coolly said that she did not feel in the humour to ride for, at least, these two hours. To Vivian's surprise, even the grand-duke humoured her fancy, and declared that he should then be happy to attend them after the court-dinner. Until that time Vivian was amused by madame; and the grand-duke exclusively devoted himself to the baroness. His royal highness was in his happiest mood; and his winning manners and elegant conversation, soon chased away the cloud which for a moment had settled on the young lady's fair brow.

CHAPTER X.

THE Grand-duke of Reisenberg was an enthusiastic lover of music, and his people were consequently music mad. The whole city were fiddling day and night, or blowing trumpets, oboes, and bassoons. Sunday, however, was the most harmonious day in the week. The opera amused the court and the wealthiest bourgeoisie; and few private houses could not boast their family concert, or small party of performers. In the guinguettes, or tea-gardens, of which there were many in the suburbs of the city, bearing the euphonious, romantic, and fashionable titles of Tivoli, Arcadia, and Vauxhall, a strong and amateur orchestra was never wanting. Strolling through the city on a Sunday afternoon many a pleasing picture of innocent domestic enjoyment might be observed.

In the arbour of a garden a very stout man, with a fair, broad, good-natured, solid German face, may be seen perspiring under the scientific exertion of the French horn; himself wisely disencumbered of the needless incumbrance of his pea-green coat and showy waistcoat, which lay neatly folded by his side; while his large and sleepy blue eyes actually gleam with enthusiasm. His daughter, a soft and delicate girl, touches the light guitar; catching the notes of the music from the opened opera, which is placed before the father on a mossy music stand. Her voice joins in melody with her mother; who, like all German mothers, seems only her daughter's self, subdued by an additional twenty years. The bow of one violin,

her dark eye asks why this corsair is so dear to her? She turns again, and raises the lamp with her long white arm, that the light may fall on the captive's countenance. She gazes, without moving, on the sleeper—touches the dagger with a slow and tremulous hand, and starts from the contact with terror. She again touches it;—it is drawn from her vest—it falls to the ground. He wakes—he stares with wonder:—he sees a female not less fair than Medora. Confused, she tells him her station: she tells him that her pity is as certain as his doom. He avows his readiness to die;—he appears undaunted—he thinks of Medora—he buries his face in his hands. She grows pale, as he avows he loves—another. She cannot conceal her own passion. He, wondering, confesses that he supposed her love was his enemy's—was Seyd's. Gulnare shudders with horror at the name: she draws herself up to her full stature—she smiles in bitterness:—

"My love stern Seyd's! ah! no, no, not my love!"

The acting was perfect. The enthusiastic house burst out into unusual shouts of admiration. Madame Carolina applauded with her little finger on her fan. The grand-duke himself gave the signal of applause. Vivian never felt before that words were useless. His hand was violently pressed. He turned round:—it was the baroness. She was leaning back in her chair; and though she did her utmost to conceal her agitated countenance, a tear coursed down her cheek, big as the miserable Medora's!

CHAPTER XI.

ON the evening of the opera, arrived at court part of the suite of the young archduchess, the betrothed of the Crown-prince of Reisenberg. These consisted of an old gray-headed general, who had taught her imperial highness the manual exercise; and her tutor and confessor, an ancient and toothless bishop. Their youthful mistress was to follow them in a few days; and this arrival of such a distinguished portion of her suite, was the signal for the commencement of a long series of sumptuous festivities. After interchanging a number of compliments, and a few snuff-boxes, the new guests were invited by his royal highness to attend a review, which was to take place the next morning, of five thousand troops and fifty generals.

The Reisenberg army was the best appointed in Europe. Never were men seen with breasts more plumply padded, mustachios better trained, or gaiters more spotless. The grand-duke himself was a military genius, and had invented a new cut for the collars of the cavalry. His royal highness was particularly desirous of astonishing the old gray-headed governor of his future daughter by the skilful evolutions and imposing appearance of his legions. The affair was to be of the most refined nature; and the whole was to be concluded by a mock battle, in which the spectators were to be treated by a display of the most exquisite evolutions, and complicated movements, which human beings ever yet invented to destroy others, or to escape destruction. Field-marshal Count von Sohnspeer, the commander-in-chief of all the forces of

his Royal Highness the Grand-duke of Reisenberg, condescended, at the particular request of his sovereign, to conduct the whole affair himself.

At first it was rather difficult to distinguish between the army and the staff; for Darius, in the straits of Issus, was not more sumptuously and numerously attended, than Count von Sohnspeer. Wherever he moved, he was followed by a train of waving plumes and radiant epaulets, and foaming chargers, and shining steel. In fact he looked like a large military comet. Had the fate of Reisenberg depended on the result of the day, the field-marshal, and his generals, and aid-de-camps, and orderlies, could not have looked more agitated or more in earnest. Von Sohnspeer had not less than four horses in the field, on every one of which he seemed to appear in the space of five minutes. Now he was dashing along the line of the lanciers on a black charger, and now round the column of the cuirassiers on a white one. He exhorted the tirailleurs on a chestnut, and added fresh courage to the ardour of the artillery on a bay.

It was a splendid day. The bands of the respective regiments played the most triumphant tunes, as each marched on the field. The gradual arrival of the troops was very picturesque. Distant music was heard, and a corps of infantry soon made its appearance. A light bugle sounded, and a body of tirailleurs issued from the shade of a neighbouring wood. The kettle-drums and clarions heralded the presence of a troop of cavalry; and an advanced guard of light horse, told that the artillery were about to follow. The arms and standards of the troops shone in the sun; military music sounded in all parts of the field; unceasing was the bellow of the martial drum and the blast of the blood-stirring trumpet. Clouds of dust, ever and anon excited in the distance, denoted the arrival of a regiment of cavalry. Even now one approaches—it is the red lanciers. How gracefully their colonel, the young Count of Eberstein, bounds on his barb! Has Theseus turned Centaur? His spur and bridle seem rather the emblems of sovereignty than the instruments of government; he neither chastises nor directs. The rider moves without motion, and the horse judges without guidance. It would seem that the man had borrowed the beast's body, and the beast the man's mind. His regiment has formed upon the field, their stout lances erected like a young and leafless grove: but although now in line, it is with difficulty that they can subject the spirit of their warlike steeds. The trumpet has caught the ear of the horses; they stand with open nostrils, already breathing war, ere they can see an enemy; and now dashing up one leg, and now the other, they seem to complain of Nature that she has made them of any thing earthly.

The troops have all arrived; there is an unusual bustle in the field. Von Sohnspeer is again changing his horse, giving directions while he is mounting to at least a dozen aid-de-camps. Orderlies are scampering over every part of the field. Another flag, quite new, and of immense size is unfurled by the field-marshal's pavilion. A signal gun! the music in the whole field is hushed: a short silence of agitating suspense—another gun—and another! All the bands of all the regiments burst forth at the same moment into the national air: the court dash into the field!

Madame Carolina, the baroness, the Countess

Von S——, and some other ladies wore habits of the uniform of the Royal Guards. Both madame and the baroness were perfect horsewomen; and the excited spirits of Mr. Beckendorff's female relative, both during her ride, and her dashing run over the field, amidst the firing of cannon, and the crash of drums and trumpets, very strikingly contrasted with her agitation and depression of the preceding night.

"Your excellency loves the tented field, I think!" said Vivian; who was at her side.

"I love war! it is a diversion fit for kings!" was the answer. "How fine the breast-plates and helmets of those cuirassiers glisten in the sun!" continued the lady. "Do you see Von Sohnspeer! I wonder if the crown prince be with him?"

"I think he is."

"Indeed! ah! can he interest himself in any thing? He seemed Apathy itself at the opera last night. I never saw him smile, or move, and have scarcely heard his voice: but if he love war, if he be a soldier, if he be thinking of other things than a pantomime and a ball, 'tis well!—very well for his country! Perhaps he is a hero!"

At this moment the crown prince, who was of Von Sohnspeer's staff, slowly rode up to the royal party.

"Rodolph!" said the grand-duke; "do you head your regiment to-day?"

"No," was the muttered answer.

The grand-duke moved his horse to his son, and spoke to him in a low tone; evidently very earnestly. Apparently he was expostulating with him: but the effect of the royal exhortation was only to render the prince's brow more gloomy, and the expression of his withered features more sullen and more sad. The baroness watched the father and son as they were conversing, with the most intense attention. When the crown prince, in violation of his father's wishes, fell into the party, and allowed his regiment to be headed by the lieutenant-colonel, the young lady raised her lustrous eyes to heaven, with that same beautiful expression of sorrow or resignation, which had so much interested Vivian on the morning that he had translated to her the moving passage in the *Corrair*.

But the field is nearly cleared, and the mimic war has commenced. On the right appears a large body of cavalry, consisting of cuirassiers and dragoons. A van-guard of light cavalry and lancers, under the command of the Count of Eberstein, is ordered out, from this body, to harass the enemy: a strong body of infantry, supposed to be advancing. Several squadrons of light horse immediately spring forward; they form themselves into line, they wheel into column, and endeavour, by well directed manœuvres, to outflank the strong wing of the advancing enemy. After succeeding in executing all that was committed to them, and after having skirmished in the van of their own army, so as to give time for all necessary dispositions of the line of battle, the van-guard suddenly retreats between the brigades of the cavalry of the line; the prepared battery of cannon is unmasked; and a tremendous concentric fire opened on the line of the advancing foe. Taking advantage of the confusion created by this unexpected salute of his artillery, Von Sohnspeer, who commands the cavalry, gives the word "*Charge!*"

The whole body of cavalry immediately charge in masses—the extended line of the enemy is as immediately broken. But the infantry, who are commanded by one of the royal relatives and visitors, the Prince of Pike and Powdren, dexterously form into squares, and commence a masterly retreat in square battalions. At length, they take up a more favourable position than the former one. They are again galled by the artillery, who have proportionately advanced, and again charged by the cavalry in their huge masses. And now the squares of infantry partially give away. They admit the cavalry, but the exulting horse find, to their dismay, that the enemy are not routed, but that there are yet inner squares formed at salient angles. The cavalry for a moment retire, but it is only to give opportunity to their artillery to rake the obstinate foci. The execution of the battery is fearful. Headed by their commander, the whole body of cuirassiers and dragoons again charge with renewed energy and concentrated force. The infantry are thrown into the greatest confusion, and commence a rout, increased and rendered irremediable by the lancers and hussars, the former van-guard; who now, seizing on the favourable moment, again rush forward, increasing the effect of the charge of the whole army, overtaking the fugitives with their lancers, and securing the prisoners.

The victorious Von Sohnspeer, followed by his staff, now galloped up to receive the congratulations of his sovereign.

"Where are your prisoners, field-marshal?" asked his royal highness, with a flattering smile.

"What is the ransom of our unfortunate guest?" asked Madame Carolina.

"I hope we shall have another affair," said the baroness, with a flushed face and glowing eyes.

But the commander-in-chief must not tarry to bandy compliments. He is again wanted in the field. The whole troops have formed in line. Some most scientific evolutions are now executed. With them I will not weary the reader, nor dilate on the comparative advantages of forming en cremaillière and en échiquier; nor upon the duties of tirailleurs, nor upon concentric fires and eccentric movements, nor upon deploying, nor upon enfilading, nor upon oblique points, nor upon échellons. The day finished by the whole of the troops again forming a line, and passing in order before the commander-in-chief, to give him an opportunity of observing their discipline and inspecting their equipments.

The review being finished, Count von Sohnspeer and his staff joined the royal party; and after walking their horses round the field, they proceeded to his pavilion, where refreshments were prepared for them. The field-marshal, flattered by the interest which the young baroness had taken in the business of the day, and the acquaintance she evidently possessed of the more obvious details of military tactics, was inclined to be particularly courteous to her, but the object of his admiration did not encourage attentions, by which half the ladies of the court would have thought themselves as highly honoured as by those of the grand-duke himself;—so powerful a person was the field-marshal, and so little inclined by temper to cultivate the graces of the fair sex!

"In the tent keep by my side," said the baroness to Vivian. "Although I am fond of heroes, yet

Sohnspeer is not to my taste. I know not why I flatter you so by my notice, for I suppose like all Englishmen, you are not a soldier! I thought so.—Never mind! you ride well enough for a field-marshal. I really think I could give you a commission without much sticking of my conscience. No, no! I should like you nearer me. I have a good mind to make you my master of the horse, that is to say, when I am entitled to have one."

As Vivian acknowledged the young baroness' compliment by becoming emotion, and vowed that any office near her person would be the consummation of all his wishes, his eye caught the lady's: she blushed deeply, looked down upon her horse's neck, and then turned away her head.

Von Sohnspcer's pavilion excellently became the successful leader of the army of Reisenberg. Trophies taken from all sides decked its interior. The black eagle of Austria formed part of its roof, and the brazen eagle of Gaul supported part of the side. The gray-headed general looked rather grim when he saw a flag belonging to a troop, which perhaps he had himself once commanded. He vented his indignation to the toothless bishop, who crossed his breast with his fingers, covered with diamonds, and preached temperance and moderation in inarticulate sounds.

During the collation, the conversation was principally military. Madame Carolina, who was entirely ignorant of the subject of discourse, enchanted all the officers present by appearing to be the most interested person in the tent. Nothing could exceed the elegance of her eulogium of "petit guerre." The old gray general talked much about "the good old times," by which he meant the thirty years of plunder, bloodshed, and destruction, which were occasioned by the French revolution. He gloated on the recollections of horror, which he feared would never occur again. The Archduke Charles and Prince Schwartzburg were the gods of his idolatry; and Nadasti's hussars and Wurmsers' dragoons, the inferior divinities of his bloody heaven. One evolution of the morning, a discovery made by Von Sohnspcer himself, in the deploying of cavalry, created a great sensation; and it was settled that it would have been of great use to Dessaix and Clairfayt in the Netherlands affair of some eight-and-twenty years ago; and was not equalled even by Seidlitz's cavalry in the affair with the Russians at Zornsdorff. In short, every "affair" of any character during the late war, was fought over again in the tent of Field-marshal von Sohnspcer. At length from the Archduke Charles, and Prince Schwartzburg, the old gray-headed general got to Polybius and Monsieur Poland; and the grand-duke now thinking that the "affair" was taking too serious a turn, broke up the party. Madame Carolina and most of the ladies used their carriages on their return. They were nearly fifteen miles from the city; but the baroness, in spite of the most earnest solicitations, would remount her charger. Her singularity attracted the attention of Emilius von Aalengen, who immediately joined her party. As a captain in the Royal Guards, he had performed his part in the day's horrors; and the baroness immediately complimented him upon his exertions and his victory.

"It was an excellent affair!" said the lady: "I should like a mock battle every day during peace."

"A mock battle!" said Emilius von Aalengen, with a stare of great astonishment; "has there been a battle to-day? My memory, I fear, is failing me; but now that your excellency has recalled it to my mind, I have a very faint recollection of a slight squabble."

They cantered home—the baroness in unusual spirits—Vivian thinking very much of his fair companion. Her character puzzled him. That she was not the lovely simpleton that Madame Carolina believed her to be, he had little doubt. Some people have great knowledge of society, and very little of mankind. Madame Carolina was one of these. She viewed her species through only one medium. That the baroness was a woman of acute feeling, Vivian could not doubt. Her conduct at the opera, which had escaped every one's attention, made this evident. That she had seen more of the world than her previous conversation had given him to believe, was equally clear by her conduct and conversation this morning. He determined to become more acquainted with her character. Her evident partiality to his company would not render the execution of his purpose difficult. At any rate, if he discovered nothing, it was something to do: it would at least amuse him.

In the evening he joined a large party at the palace. He looked immediately for the baroness. She was surrounded by all the dandies, in consequence of the flattering conduct of Emilius von Aalengen in the morning. Their attentions she treated with contempt, and ridiculed their compliments without mercy. Without obtruding himself on her notice, Vivian joined her circle, and witnessed her demolition of the young Count of Eberstein with great amusement. Emilius von Aalengen was not there; for having now made the interesting savage the fashion, she was no longer worthy his attention, and consequently deserted. The young lady soon observed Vivian; and smiling, without the least embarrassment, that she was delighted to see him, she begged him to share her chaise-lounge. Her envious levée witnessed the preference with dismay; and as the object of their attention did not now notice their remarks, even by her expressed contempt, one by one fell away. Vivian and the baroness were left alone, and conversed together the whole evening. The lady displayed, on every subject, the most engaging ignorance; and requested information on obvious topics with the most artless naïveté. Vivian was convinced that her ignorance was not affected, and equally sure that it could not arise from imbecility of intellect; for while she surprised him by her crude questions, and her want of acquaintance with all those topics which generally form the staple of conversation; she equally amused him with her poignant wit, and the imperious and energetic manner in which she instantly expected satisfactory information on every possible subject.

CHAPTER XII.

ON the day after the review, a fancy-dress ball was to be given at court. It was to be an entertainment of a very particular nature. The lively genius of Madame Carolina, wearied of the commonplace effect generally produced by this species

of amusement—in which usually a stray Turk, and a wandering Pole, looked sedate and singular among crowds of Spanish girls, Swiss peasants, and gentlemen in uniform—had invented something novel. Her idea was ingenious. To use her own sublime phrase, she determined that the party should represent “an age!” Great difficulty was experienced in fixing upon the century which was to be honoured. At first a poetical idea was started of having something primeval—perhaps antediluvian,—but Noah, or even Father Abraham, were thought characters hardly sufficiently romantic for a fancy-dress ball; and consequently the earliest postdiluvian age was soon under consideration. Nimrod, or Sardanapalus, were distinguished personages, and might be well represented by the Master of the stag-hounds, or the Master of the Revels; but then the want of an interesting lady-character was a great objection. Semiramis, though not without style in her own way, was not sufficiently Parisian for Madame Carolina. New ages were proposed, and new objections started; and so the “Committee of Selection,” which consisted of Madame herself, the Countess von S—, and a few other dames of fashion, gradually slid through the four great empires. Athens was not aristocratic enough, and then the women were nothing. In spite of her admiration of the character of Aspasia, Madame Carolina somewhat doubted the possibility of persuading the ladies of the court of Reims to appear in the characters of *tragédies*. Rome presented great capabilities, and greater difficulties. Finding themselves, after many days’ sitting and study, still very far from coming to a decision, madame called in the aid of the grand-duke, who proposed “something national.” The proposition was plausible; but according to Madame Carolina, Germany, until her own time, had been only a land of barbarism and barbarians; and therefore, in such a country, in a national point of view, what could there be interesting? The middle ages, as they are usually styled, in spite of the Emperor Charlemagne—“that oasis in the desert of barbarism”—to use her own eloquent and original image—were her particular aversion. “The age of chivalry is past!” was as constant an exclamation of Madame Carolina, as it was of Mr. Burke. “The age of chivalry is past—and very fortunate that it is. What resources could they have had in the age of chivalry?—an age without either moral or experimental philosophy; an age in which they were equally ignorant of the doctrine of association of ideas, and of the doctrine of electricity; and when they were as devoid of a knowledge of the incalculable powers of the human mind as of the incalculable powers of steam!” Had Madame Carolina been the consort of an Italian grand-duke, selection would not be difficult; and, to inquire no farther, the court of the Medicis alone would afford them every thing they wanted. But Germany never had any character, and never produced nor had been the resort of illustrious men and interesting persons. What was to be done? The age of Frederick the Great was the only thing; and then that was so recent, and would offend the Austrians; it could not be thought of.

At last, when the “Committee of Selection,” was almost in despair, some one proposed a period, which not only would be German—not only would compliment the House of Austria,—but, what was of still greater importance, would allow of every

contemporary character of interest of every nation—the age of Charles the Fifth! The suggestion was received with enthusiastic shouts, and adopted on the spot. “The Committee of Selection” was immediately dissolved, and its members as immediately formed themselves into a “Committee of Arrangement.” Lists of all the persons of any fame, distinction, or notoriety, who had lived either in the empire of Germany, the kingdoms of Spain, Portugal, France, or England, the Italian States, the Netherlands, the Americas, and in short, in every country in the known world, were immediately formed. Von Chronicle, rewarded for his last historical novel by a riband and the title of baron, was appointed secretary to the “Committee of Costume.” All guests who received a card of invitation, were desired, on or before a certain day, to send in the title of their adopted character, and a sketch of their intended dress, that their plans might receive the sanction of the ladies of the “Committee of Arrangement,” and their dresses, the approbation of the Secretary of Costume. By this method, the chance and inconvenience of two persons selecting and appearing in the same character, were destroyed and prevented. After exciting the usual jealousies, intrigues, dissatisfaction, and ill-blood, by the influence and imperturbable temper of Madame Carolina, every thing was arranged—Emilius von Aslingen being the only person who set both the Committees of Arrangement and Costume at defiance; and treated the repeated applications of their respected secretary with the most contemptuous silence. The indignant Baron von Chronicle entreated the strong interference of the “Committee of Arrangement;” but Emilius von Aslingen was too powerful an individual to be treated by others as he treated them. Had the fancy-dress ball of the sovereign been attended by all his subjects, with the exception of this captain in his Guards, the whole affair would have been a failure; would have been dark, in spite of the glare of ten thousand lamps, and the glories of all the jewels of his state; would have been dull, although each guest were wittier than Pasquin himself; and very vulgar, although attended by lords of as many quarters as the ancient shield of his own antediluvian house! O Fashion!—I have no time for invocations. All, therefore, that the ladies of the “Committee of Arrangement” could do, was to enclose to the rebellious Von Aslingen a list of the expected characters, and a resolution passed in consequence of his contumacy; that no person, or persons, was, or were, to appear as either or any of those characters, unless he, or they, could produce a ticket, or tickets, granted by a member of the “Committee of Arrangement,” and countersigned by the secretary of “the Committee of Costume.” At the same time that these vigorous measures were resolved on, no persons spoke on Emilius von Aslingen’s rebellious conduct in terms of greater admiration than the ladies of the committee themselves. If possible, he, in consequence, became even a more influential and popular personage than before; and his conduct procured him almost the adoration of persons, who, had they dared to imitate him, would have been instantly crushed; and would have been banished society principally by the exertions of the very individual whom they had the presumption to mimic. O Fashion!—I forgive.

In the gardens of the palace was a spacious amphitheatre, cut out in green seats for the spectators

blushes through her rouge, when she perceives that so celebrated, "so interesting a character" as Ignatius Loyola, the founder of the Jesuits, has not been included in the all-comprehensive lists of her committee.

CHAPTER XIX.

HENRY of England led the Polonaise with Louise of Savoy; Margaret of Austria would not join it: waltzing quickly followed. The emperor seldom left the side of the Queen of Navarre, and often conversed with her majesty's poet. The Prince of Asturias hovered for a moment round his father's daughter, as if he were summoning resolution to ask her to waltz. Once indeed, he opened his mouth. Could it have been to speak? but the young Margaret gave no encouragement to his unusual exertion; and Philip of Asturias looking, if possible, more sad and sombre than before, skulked away. The crown prince left the gardens, and now a smile lit up every face except that of the young baroness. The gracious grand-duke, unwilling to see a gloomy countenance anywhere to-night, turned to Vivian, who was speaking to Madame Carolina, and said, "Gentle poet, would that thou hadst some chanson or courtly compliment, to chase the cloud which hovers on the brow of our much-loved daughter of Austria! Your popularity, sir," continued the grand-duke, dropping his mock-heroic vein, and speaking in a much lower tone: "your popularity, sir, among the ladies of the court, cannot be increased by any panegyric of ours; nor are we insensible, believe us, to the assiduity and skill with which you have complied with our wishes, in making our court agreeable to the relative of a man, to whom we owe so much as Mr. Beckendorff. We are informed, Mr. Grey," continued his royal highness, "that you have no intention of very speedily returning to your country; we wish that we could count you among our peculiar attendants. If you have an objection to live in our palace, without performing your quota of duty to the state, we shall have no difficulty in finding you an office, and clothing you in our official costume. Think of this!" So saying, with a gracious smile, his royal highness, leading Madame Carolina, commenced a walk round the gardens.

The young baroness did not follow them. Solymán the Magnificent, and Bayard the irreproachable, and Barbarossa the pirate, and Bourbon the rebel, immediately surrounded her. Few persons were higher in tone than the Turkish emperor and his admiral—few persons talked more agreeable nonsense than the knight, *sans peur et sans reproche*—no person was more important than the warlike constable; but their attention, their amusement, and their homage, were to-night thrown away on the object of their observance. The baroness listened to them without interest, and answered them with brevity. She did not even condescend, as she had done before, to enter into a war of words to mortify their vanity or exercise their wit. She treated them neither with contempt nor courtesy. If a smile welcomed their remarks, at least her silence was not scornful, and the most shallow-headed prater that fluttered around her, felt that he

was received with dignity and not with disdain. Awed by her conduct, not one of them dared to be flippant, and every one of them soon became dull. The ornaments of the court of Riesenbergh, the arbiters of ton and the lords of taste, stared with astonishment at each other, when they found, to their mutual surprise, that at one moment, in such a select party, universal silence pervaded. In this state of affairs, every one felt that his dignity required his speedy disappearance from the lady's presence. The Orientals taking advantage of Bourbon's returning once more to the charge, with an often unanswered remark, coolly walked away: the chevalier made an adroit and honourable retreat, by joining a passing party; and the constable was the only one, who, being left in solitude and silence, was finally obliged to make a formal bow, and retire discomfited, from the side of the only woman with whom he had ever condescended to fall in love. Leaning against the trunk of a tree at some little distance, Vivian Grey watched the formation and dissolution of the young baroness' levee, with the liveliest interest. His eyes met the lady's, as she raised them from the ground, on Von Sohnspeer quitting her. She immediately beckoned to Vivian, but without her usual smile. He was directly at her side, but she did not speak. At last he said, "I think this is a most brilliant scene!"

"You think so—do you?" answered the lady, in a tone and manner which almost made Vivian believe for a moment, that his friend Mr. Beckendorff was at his side.

"Decidedly his daughter!" thought he.

"You do not seem in your usual spirits to-night!" said Vivian.

"I hardly know what my usual spirits are," said the lady; in a manner which would have made Vivian imagine that his presence was as disagreeable to her as that of Count von Sohnspeer, had not the lady herself invited his company.

"I suppose the scene is very brilliant," continued the baroness, after a few moment's silence. "At least all here seem to think so,—except two persons."

"And who are they?" asked Vivian.

"Myself, and—the crown prince. I am almost sorry that I did not dance with him. There seems a wonderful similarity in our dispositions."

"You are pleased to be severe to-night!"

"And who shall complain when the first person I satirize is myself?"

"It is most considerate in you," said Vivian, "to undertake such an office; for it is one which you yourself are alone capable of fulfilling. The only person that can ever satirize your excellency is yourself; and I think even then, that in spite of your candour, your self-examination must please us with a self-panegyric."

"Nay, a truce to your compliments; at least let me hear better things from you. I cannot any longer endure the glare of these lamps and dresses: your arm! Let us walk for a few minutes in the more retired and cooler parts of the gardens."

The baroness and Vivian left the amphitheatre by a different path to that by which the grand duke and Madame Carolina had quitted it. They found the walks quite solitary; for the royal party, which was very small, contained the only persons who had yet left the stage.

Vivian and his companion strolled about for some time, conversing on subjects of casual interest.

The baroness, though no longer absent, either in her manner or her conversation, was not in her accustomed spirits; and Vivian, while he flattered himself that he was more entertaining than usual, felt to his mortification, that the lady was not entertained.

"I am afraid you find it very dull here," said he: "shall we return?"

"O, no; do not let us return! We have so short a time to be together, that we must not allow even one hour to be dull."

As Vivian was about to reply, he heard the joyous voice of young Maximilian; it sounded very near; the royal party were approaching. The baroness expressed her earnest desire to avoid it; and as to advance or retreat, in these labyrinthine walks, was almost equally hazardous, they retired into one of those green recesses which I have before mentioned; indeed, it was the very evergreen grove, in the centre of which the Nymph of the Fountain watched for her loved Carian youth. A shower of moonlight fell on the marble statue, and showed the nymph in an attitude of consummate skill: her modesty struggling with her desire, and herself crouching in her hitherto pure waters, while her anxious ear listens for the bounding step of the fearless huntsman.

"The air is cooler here," said the baroness, "or the sound of the falling water is peculiarly refreshing to my senses. They have passed; I rejoice that we did not return; I do not think that I could have remained among those lamps another moment. How singular, actually to view with aversion a scene which appears to enchant all!"

"A scene which I should have thought would have been particularly charming to you," said Vivian: "you are dispirited to-night?"

"Am I?" said the baroness. "I ought not to be; not to be more dispirited than I ever am. To-night I expected pleasure; nothing has happened which I did not expect, and every thing which I did. And yet I am sad! Do you think that happiness can ever be sad! I think it must be so. But whether I am sorrowful, or happy, I can hardly tell; for it is only within these few days that I have known either grief or joy."

"It must be counted an eventful period in your existence, which reckons in its brief hours a first acquaintance with such passions!" said Vivian, with a searching eye and an inquiring voice.

"Yes; an eventful period—certainly an eventful period," answered the baroness; with a thoughtful air and in measured words.

"I cannot bear to see a cloud upon that brow?" said Vivian. "Have you forgotten how much was to be done to-night! How eagerly you looked forward to its arrival! How bitterly we were to regret the termination of the mimic empire?"

"I have forgotten nothing: would that I had! I will not look grave. I will be gay; and yet when I remember how soon other mockery, besides this splendid pageant, must be terminated, why should I look gay!—why may I not weep?"

"Nay, if we are to moralize on worldly felicity, I fear, that instead of inspiring you, which is my wish, I shall prove but a too congenial companion; but such a theme is not for you."

"And why should it be for one, who though he lecture me with such gravity and gracefulness, can scarcely be entitled to play the part of Mentor by the weight of years!" said the baroness with a

smile; "for one, who, I trust—who, I should think, as little deserved, and was as little inured to sorrow as myself!"

"To find that you have cause to grieve," said Vivian; "and to learn from you, at the same time your opinion of my own lot, prove what I have too often had the sad opportunity of observing; that the face of man is scarcely more genuine and less deceitful, than these masquerade dresses which we now wear."

"But you are not unhappy?" asked the baroness with a quick voice.

"Not now," said Vivian.

His companion seated herself on the marble balustrade which surrounded the fountain: she did not immediately speak again, and Vivian was silent, for he was watching her motionless countenance as her large brilliant eyes gazed with earnestness on the falling water sparkling in the moonlight. Surely it was not the mysterious portrait at Beckendorff's that he beheld! How came he not to remark this likeness before!

She turned—she seized his hand—she pressed it with warmth.

"O friend! too lately found; why have we met to part?"

"To part, dearest!" said he, in a low and rapid voice; "to part! and why should we part?—why—"

"O! ask not, ask not; your question is agony." She tried to withdraw her hand, he pressed it with renewed energy, it remained in his,—she turned away her head, and both were silent.

"O! lady," said Vivian, as he knelt at her side; "why are we not happy?"

His arm is round her waist—gently he bends his head—their speaking eyes meet, and their trembling lips cling into a kiss!

A seal of love, and purity, and faith!—and the chaste moon need not have blushed as she lit up the countenances of the lovers.

"O! lady, why are we not happy?"

"We are, we are: is not this happiness—is not this joy—is not this bliss! Bliss," she continued, in a low, broken voice, "to which I have no right, no title. O! quit, quit my hand! Happiness is not for me!" She extricated herself from his arm, and sprang upon her feet. Alarm, rather than affection, was visible on her agitated features. It seemed to cost her a great effort to collect her scattered senses; the effort was made with pain, but with success.

"Forgive me, forgive me," she said, in a hurried and indistinct tone; "forgive me! I would speak, but cannot,—not now at least; we have been long away, too long; our absence will be remarked to-night; to-night we must give up to the gratification of others, but I will speak. For yours, for my own sake, let us—let us go! You know that we are to be very gay to-night, and gay we will be. Who shall prevent us! At least the present hour is our own; and when the future ones must be so sad, why, why trifle with this?"

CHAPTER XIV.

THE reader is not to suppose that Vivian Grey thought of the young baroness, merely in the rapid scenes which I have sketched. There were

few moments in the day in which her image did not occupy his thoughts, and which indeed, he did not spend in her presence. From the first, her character had interested him. His accidental, but extraordinary acquaintance with Beckendorff, made him view any individual connected with that singular man, with a far more curious feeling than could influence the young nobles of the court, who were ignorant of the minister's personal character. There was an evident mystery about the character and situation of the baroness, which well accorded with the eccentric and romantic career of the prime minister of Reisenberg. Of the precise nature of her connexion with Beckendorff, Vivian was wholly ignorant. The world spoke of her as his daughter, and the affirmation of Madame Carolina confirmed the world's report. Her name was still unknown to him; and although, during the few moments that they had enjoyed an opportunity of conversing together alone, Vivian had made every exertion, of which good breeding, impelled by curiosity, is capable, and had devised many little artifices, with which a schooled address is well acquainted, to obtain it, his exertions had hitherto been perfectly unsuccessful. If there were a mystery, the young lady was competent to preserve it; and with all her naïveté, her interesting ignorance of the world, and her evidently uncontrolled spirit, no hasty word ever fell from her cautious lips, which threw any light on the objects of his inquiry. Though impetuous, she was never indiscreet, and often displayed a caution which was little in accordance with her youth and temper. The last night had witnessed the only moment in which her passions seemed for a time to have struggled with, and to have overcome, her judgment; but it was only for a moment. That display of overpowering feeling had cost Vivian a sleepless night; and he is at this instant pacing up and down the chamber of his hotel, thinking of that which he had imagined could exercise his thought no more.

She was beautiful—she loved him;—she was unhappy! To be loved by any woman is flattering to the feelings of every man, no matter how deeply he may have quaffed the bitter goblet of worldly knowledge. The praise of a fool is incense to the wisest of us; and though we believe ourselves broken-hearted, it still delights us to find that we are loved. The memory of Violet Fane was still as fresh, as sweet, to the mind of Vivian Grey, as when he pressed her blushing cheek, for the first and only time. To love again—really to love as he had done—he once thought was impossible; he thought so still. The character of the baroness, as I have said, had interested him from the first. Her ignorance of mankind, and her perfect acquaintance with the most polished forms of society; her extreme beauty, her mysterious rank, her proud spirit and impetuous feelings; her occasional pensiveness, her extreme waywardness,—had astonished, perplexed, and enchanted him. But he had never felt in love. It never, for a moment, had entered into his mind, that his lonely bosom could again be a fit resting-place, for one so lovely, so young. Scared at the misery which had always followed in his track, he would have shuddered ere he again asked a human being to share his sad and blighted fortunes. The partiality of the baroness for his society, without flattering his vanity, or giving rise to thoughts more serious than how he could most

completely enchant for her the passing hour, had certainly made the time passed in her presence, the least gloomy which he had lately experienced. At the same moment that he left the saloon of the palace, he had supposed that his image quitted her remembrance; and if she had again welcomed him with cheerfulness and cordiality, he had felt that his reception was owing to not being, perhaps, quite as frivolous as the Count of Eberstein, and being rather more amusing than the Baron of Gernsbach.

It was therefore with the greatest astonishment that, last night, he had found that he was loved—loved too, by this beautiful and haughty girl, who had treated the advances of the most distinguished nobles with ill-concealed scorn; and who had so presumed upon her dubious relationship to the bourgeois minister, that nothing but her own surpassing loveliness, and her parent's all-engrossing influence, could have excused or authorized her conduct.

Vivian had yielded to the magic of the moment, and had returned the love, apparently no sooner proffered than withdrawn. Had he left the gardens of the palace the baroness' plighted lover, he might perhaps have deplored his rash engagement; and the sacred image of his first and hallowed love might have risen up in judgment against his violated affection—but how had he and the interesting stranger parted! He was rejected, even while his affection was returned; and while her flattering voice told him that he alone could make her happy, she had mournfully declared that happiness could not be hers. How was this! Could she be another's! Her agitation at the opera, often the object of his thought, quickly occurred to him. It must be so. Ah! another's! and who this rival!—this proud possessor of a heart which could not beat for him! Madame Carolina's declaration that the baroness must be married off, was at this moment remembered: her marked observation, that Von Sohnspeer was no son of Beckendorff's, not forgotten. The field-marshal too was the valued friend of the minister; and it did not fail to occur to Vivian that it was not Von Sohnspeer's fault, that his attendance on the baroness was not as constant as his own. Indeed, the unusual gallantry of the commander-in-chief had been the subject of many a joke among the young lords of the court; and the reception of his addresses by their unmerciful object, not unobserved or unspared. But as for poor Von Sohnspeer, what could be expected, as Emilius von Aslingen observed, "from a man whose softest compliment was as long, loud, and obscure, as a birth-day's salute!"

No sooner was the affair clear to Vivian—no sooner was he convinced that a powerful obstacle existed to the love or union of himself and the baroness, than he began to ask, what right the interests of third persons had to interfere between the mutual affection of any individuals. He thought of her in the moonlit garden, struggling with her pure and natural passion. He thought of her exceeding beauty—her exceeding love. He beheld this rare and lovely creature in the embrace of Von Sohnspeer. He turned from the picture in disgust and indignation. She was his—nature had decreed it. She should be the bride of no other man. Sooner than yield her up, he would beard Beckendorff himself in his own retreat, and re-

very hazard, and meet every danger, which theudent imagination of a lover could conceive. Was he madly to reject the happiness which providence, or destiny, or chance had at length offered him? If the romance of boyhood could never be realized, at least with this engaging being for its companion, he might pass through his remaining years in calmness and in peace. His trials were perhaps over. Alas! this is the last delusion of unhappy men!

Vivian called at the palace, but the fatigues of the preceding night prevented either of the ladies from being visible. In the evening, he joined a very small and select circle. The party, indeed, only consisted of the grand-duke, madame, their sisters, and the usual attendants, himself, and Von Sohnspier. The quiet of the little circle did not afford a striking contrast with the noise, and glare, and splendour of the last night, than did Vivian's subdued reception by the baroness, with her agitated demeanour in the garden. She was cordial but calm. He found it quite impossible to gain even one moment's private conversation with her. Madame Carolina monopolized his attention, as much to favour the views of the field-marshal, as to discuss the comparative merits of Pope, as a moralist and a poet; and Vivian had the mortification of observing his odious rival, whom he now thoroughly detested, discharge, without ceasing, his royal salutes in the impatient ear of Beckendorff's lovely laughter.

Towards the conclusion of the evening, a chamberlain entered the room, and whispered his mission to the baroness. She immediately rose and quitted the apartment. As the party was breaking up, she again entered. Her countenance was very agitated. Madame Carolina was being overwhelmed with the compliments of the grand-marshal, and Vivian seized the opportunity of reaching the baroness. After a few very hurried sentences she dropped her glove. Vivian gave it her. So many persons were round them, that it was impossible to converse except on the most common topics. The glove was again dropped.

"I see," said the baroness, with a very meaning look, "that you are but a recreant knight, or else you would not part with a lady's glove so easily."

Vivian gave a rapid glance round the room. No one was observing him, and the glove was immediately in his pocket. He hurried home, rushed up the staircase of the hotel, ordered lights, locked the door, and with a sensation of indescribable anxiety, tore the precious glove out of his pocket; seized, opened, and read the enclosed and following note. It was written in pencil, in a very hurried hand, and some of the words were repeated.

"I leave the court to-night. He is here himself. No art can postpone my departure. Much, much, I wish to say to you; to say—to say—to you. He is to have an interview with the grand-duke to-morrow morning. Dare you come to his place in his absence? You know the private road. He goes by the high-road, and calls in his way on a forest counsellor: I forget his name, but it is the white house by the barrier—you know it. Watch him to-morrow morning; about nine or ten I should think—here, here;—and then for heaven's sake let me see you. Dare every thing! Fail not—fail not! Mind, by the private road—

by the private road:—beware the other! You know the ground. God bless you!

"SIBYLLA."

CHAPTER XV.

VIVIAN read the note over a thousand times. He could not retire to rest. He called Essper George, and gave him all necessary directions for the morning. About three o'clock Vivian lay down on a sofa, and slept for a few short hours. He started often in his short and feverish slumber. His dreams were unceasing and inexplicable. At first Von Sohnspier was their natural hero; but soon the scene shifted. Vivian was at Ems—walking under the well-remembered lime trees, and with the baroness. Suddenly, although it was mid-day, the sun became very large, blood-red, and fell out of the heavens—his companion screamed—a man rushed forward with a drawn sword. It was the idiot Crown Prince of Reisenberg. Vivian tried to oppose him, but without success. The infuriate ruffian sheathed his weapon in the heart of the baroness. Vivian shrieked, and fell upon her body—and to his horror, found himself embracing the cold corpse of Violet Fane!

Vivian and Essper mounted their horses about seven o'clock. At eight, they had reached a small inn near the forest counsellor's house, where Vivian was to remain until Essper had watched the entrance of the minister. It was a very few minutes past nine when Essper returned, with the joyful intelligence that Owlface and his master had been seen to enter the court-yard. Vivian immediately mounted Max, and telling Essper to keep a sharp watch, he set spurs to his horse.

"Now, Max, my good steed, each minute is golden—serve thy master well!" He patted the horse's neck—the animal's erected ears proved how well it understood its master's wishes; and taking advantage of the loose bridle, which was confidently allowed it, the horse sprang, rather than galloped to the minister's residence. Nearly an hour, however, was lost in gaining the private road, for Vivian, after the caution in the baroness's letter, did not dare the high-road.

He is galloping up the winding rural lane, where he met Beckendorff on the second morning of his visit. He has reached the little gate, and following the example of the grand-duke, ties Max at the entrance. He dashes over the meadows, not following the path, but crossing straight through the long and dewy grass—he leaps over the light iron railing—he is rushing up the walk—he takes a rapid glance, in passing, at the little summer-house—the blue passion-flower is still blooming—the house is in sight—a white handkerchief is waving from the drawing-room window! He sees it—fresh wings are added to his course—he dashes through a bed of flowers, frightens the white peacock, darts through the library-window, is in the drawing-room!

The baroness was there: pale and agitated, she stood beneath the mysterious picture, with one arm leaning on the old carved mantelpiece. Overcome by her emotions, she did not move forward to meet him as he entered; but Vivian observed neither her constraint nor her agitation.

"Sibylla! dearest Sibylla! say you are mine!"

He caught her in his arms. She struggled not to disengage herself; but as he dropped upon one knee, she suffered him gently to draw her down upon the other. Her head sank upon her arm, which rested upon his shoulder. Overpowered, she sobbed convulsively. He endeavoured to calm her, but her agitation increased; and many, many minutes elapsed, ere she seemed to be even sensible of his presence. At length she became more calm, and apparently making a struggle to compose herself, she raised her head.

"Are you better, dearest?" asked Vivian, with a voice of the greatest anxiety.

"Much! much! quite, quite well! Let us walk for a moment about the room!"

As Vivian was just raising her from his knee, he was suddenly seized by the throat with a strong grasp. He turned round—it was Mr. Beckendorff, with a face deadly white, his full eyes darting from their sockets like a hungry snake's, and the famous Italian dagger in his right hand.

"Villain!" said he, in the low voice of fatal passion. "Villain! is this your destiny?"

Vivian's first thoughts were for the baroness; and turning his head from Beckendorff, he looked with the eye of anxious love to his companion. But, instead of fainting—instead of being overwhelmed by this terrible interruption, she seemed, on the contrary, to have suddenly regained her natural spirit and self-possession. The blood had returned to her hitherto pale cheek, and the fire to an eye before dull with weeping. She extricated herself immediately from Vivian's encircling arm; and by so doing, enabled him to spring upon his legs, and to have struggled, if it had been necessary, more equally with the powerful grasp of his assailant.

"Stand off, sir!" said the baroness, with an air of inexpressible dignity, and a voice which even at this crisis seemed to anticipate that it would be obeyed. "Stand off, sir! stand off, I command you!"

Beckendorff, for one moment, was motionless: he then gave her a look of the most piercing earnestness, threw Vivian, rather than released him, from his hold, and flung the dagger, with a bitter smile, into the corner of the room. "Well, madam!" said he, in a choking voice, "you are obeyed!"

"Mr. Grey," continued the baroness, "I regret that this outrage should have been experienced by you, because you have dared to serve me. My presence should have preserved you from this contumely; but what are we to expect from those who pride themselves upon being the sons of slaves! You shall hear further from me." So saying, the lady howling to Vivian, and sweeping by the minister, with a glance of indescribable disdain, quitted the apartment. As she was on the point of leaving the room, Vivian was standing against the wall, with a pale face and folded arms—Beckendorff with his back to the window, his eyes fixed on the ground—and Vivian to his astonishment perceived, what escaped the minister's notice, that while the lady bade him adieu with one hand, she made rapid signs with the other to some unknown person in the garden.

Mr. Beckendorff and Vivian were left alone, and the latter was the first to break silence.

"Mr. Beckendorff," said he, in a calm voice, "considering the circumstances under which you

have found me in your house this morning, I should have known how to excuse, and to forget, any irritable expressions which a moment of ungovernable passion might have inspired. I should have passed them over unnoticed. But your unjustifiable behaviour has exceeded that line of demarcation, which sympathy with human feelings allows even men of honour to recognise. You have disgraced both me and yourself by giving me a blow. It is, as that lady well styled it, an outrage—an outrage which the blood of any other man but yourself could only obliterate from my memory; but while I am inclined to be indulgent to your exalted station and your peculiar character, I at the same time expect, and now wait for an apology."

"An apology!" said Beckendorff, now beginning to stamp up and down the room; "an apology! Shall it be made to you, sir, or the archduchess?"

"The archduchess!" said Vivian; "good God! what can you mean? Did I hear you right?"

"I said, the archduchess," answered Beckendorff with firmness; "a princess of the house of Austria, and the pledged wife of his royal highness the Crown Prince of Reisenberg. Perhaps you may now think that other persons have to apologize!"

"Mr. Beckendorff," said Vivian, "I am overwhelmed; I declare, upon my honour—"

"Stop, sir! you have said too much already—"

"But, Mr. Beckendorff, surely you will allow me to explain—"

"Sir! there is no need of explanation. I know every thing—more than you do yourself. You can have nothing to explain to me; and I presume you are now fully aware of the impossibility of again speaking to her. It is at present within an hour of noon. Before sunset you must be twenty miles from the court—so far you will be attended. Do not answer me—you know my power. A remonstrance only, and I write to Vienna; your progress shall be stopped throughout the south of Europe. For her sake, this business will be hushed up. An important and secret mission will be the accredited reason of your leaving Reisenberg. This will be confirmed by your official attendant, who will be an envoy's courier. Farewell!"

As Mr. Beckendorff quitted the room, his confidential servant, the messenger to Turripurva, entered; and with the most respectful bow, informed Vivian that the horses were ready. In about three hours time, Vivian Grey, followed by the government messenger, stopped at his hotel. The landlord and waiters bowed with increased obsequiousness on seeing him so attended; and in a few minutes Reisenberg was ringing with the news, that his appointment to the under-secretaryship of state was now "a settled thing."

BOOK THE EIGHTH.

CHAPTER I.

THE landlord of the Grand Hotel of the Four Nations at Reisenberg was somewhat consoled for the sudden departure of his distinguished customer, by selling the plenipotentiary a travelling carriage.

ately taken for a doubtful bill from a gambling Russian general, at one hundred per cent. profit. In this convenient vehicle, in the course of a couple of hours after his arrival in the city, was Mr. Vivian Grey borne through the Gate of the Allies. Essper George, who had reached the hotel about half an hour after his master, followed behind the carriage in his hack, leading Max. The courier cleared the road before, and expedited the arrival of the Special Envoy of the Grand-duke of Reisenberg at the point of his destination, by ordering the horses, clearing the barriers, and paying the postillions in advance. Vivian had never travelled before with such style and speed.

Our hero covered himself up with his cloak, and drew his travelling cap over his eyes, though it was one of the hottest days of this singularly hot autumn; but the very light of heaven was hateful to him. Perfectly overwhelmed with his last crushing misfortune, he was unable even to morosely reflect, or to regret, or even to remember. Entranced in a reverie, the only figure that occurred to his mind was the young archduchess, and the only sounds that dwelt on his ear, were the words of Beckendorff: but neither to the person of the first, nor to the voice of the second, did he annex any definite idea.

After nearly three hours travelling, which to Vivian seemed both an age and a minute, he was roused from his stupor by the door of his calèche being opened. He shook himself as a man does who has wakened from a benumbing and heavy sleep, although his eyes were the whole time wide open. The disturbing intruder was his courier; who, bowing, with his hat in his hand, informed his excellency that he was now twenty miles from Reisenberg, and that the last postillions had done their duty so exceedingly well, that he trusted his excellency would instruct his servant to give them double the tariff. Here he regretted that he was under the necessity of quitting his excellency, and he begged to present his excellency with his passport. "It is made out for Vienna," continued the messenger. "A private pass, sir, of the prime minister, and will entitle you to the greatest consideration." The messenger receiving a low bow for his answer and reward, took his leave.

The carriage was soon again advancing rapidly to the next post-house; when, after they had proceeded about half a mile, Essper George calling loudly from behind, the drivers suddenly stopped. Just as Vivian, to whose tortured mind the rapid movement of the carriage was some relief—for it produced an excitement which prevented thought—was about to inquire the cause of this stoppage, Essper George rode up to the calèche.

"Kind sir!" said he, with a very peculiar look, "I have a packet for you."

"A packet! from whom? speak! give it me!"

"Hush! hush! hush! softly, softly, good master. Here I am about to commit rank treason for your sake; and a hasty word is the only reward of my rashness."

"Nay, nay, good Essper, try me not now!"

"I will not. I will not, kind sir; but the truth is, I could not give you the packet while that double-faced knave was with us, or even while he was in sight. 'In good truth,' as Master Rodolph was wont to say—ah! when shall I see his sleekness again!"

"But of this packet!"

"Fair and softly, fair and softly,' good sir! as Hunsdrich the porter said, when I would have drunk the mulled wine, while he was on the cold staircase—"

"Essper! do you mean to enrage me?"

"By St. Hubert!" as that worthy gentleman, the grand-marshal, was in the habit of swearing, I—"

"This is too much—what are the idle sayings of these people to me?"

"Nay, nay, kind sir, they do but show that each of us has his own way of telling a story; and that he who would hear a tale, must let the teller's breath come out of his own nostrils."

"Well, Essper, speak on! Stranger things have happened to me than to be reproved by my own servant."

"Nay, my kind master, say not a bitter word to me, because you have slipped out of a scrape with your head on your shoulders. The packet is from Mr. Beckendorff's daughter."

"Ah! why did not you give it to me before?"

"Why do I give it you now! Because I'm a fool—that's why. What! you wanted it when that double-faced scoundrel was watching every eyelash of yours, as it moved from the breath of a fly!—a fellow who can see as well at the back of his head, as from his face. I should like to poke out his front eyes, to put him on an equality with the rest of mankind. He it was who let the old gentleman know of your visit this morning, and I shrewdly suspect that he has been nearer your limbs of late than you have imagined. Every dog has his day, and the oldest pig must look for his knife! The devil was once cheated on Sunday, and I have been too sharp for puss in boots and his mousetrap! Prowling about the forest counselor's house, I saw your new servant, sir, gallop in, and his old master soon gallop out; I was off as quick as they but was obliged to leave my horse within two miles of the house, and then trust to my legs. I crept through the shrubs like a land tortoise; but, of course, too late to warn you. However, I was in for the death, and making signs to the young lady, who directly saw that I was a friend,—bless her! she is as quick as a partridge.—I left you to settle it with papa, and after all, did that which I suppose your highness intended to do yourself—made my way into the young lady's—bed-chamber."

"Hold your tongue, you rascal! and give me the packet."

"There it is, sir, and now we will go on; but we must stay an hour at the next post, if your honour pleases not to sleep there; for both Max and my own hack have had a sharp day's work."

Vivian tore open the packet. It contained a long letter, written on the night of her return to Beckendorff's; she had stayed up the whole night writing. It was to have been forwarded to Vivian, in case of their not being able to meet. In the enclosure were a few hurried lines, written since the catastrophe. They were these:—"May this safely reach you! Can you ever forgive me? The enclosed, you will see, was intended for you, in case of our not meeting. It anticipated sorrow: yet what were its anticipations to our reality!"

The archduchess' letter was evidently written under the influence of the most agitated feelings. I omit it; because, as the mystery of her character is now explained, a great portion of her common-

cation would be irrelevant to our tale. She spoke of her exalted station as a woman—that station which so many women envy—in a spirit of the most agonizing bitterness. A royal princess is only the most flattered of state victims. She is a political sacrifice, by which enraged governments are appeased, wavering allies conciliated, and ancient amities confirmed. Debarred by her rank and her education from looking forward to that exchange of equal affection, which is the great end and charm of female existence; no individual finds more fatally, and feels more keenly, that pomp is not felicity, and splendour not content.

Deprived of all those sources of happiness which seem inherent in woman, the wife of the sovereign sometimes seeks in politics and in pleasure, a means of excitement which may purchase oblivion. But the political queen is a rare character; she must possess an intellect of unusual power, and her lot must be considered as an exception in the fortunes of female royalty. Even the political queen generally closes an agitated career with a broken heart. And for the unhappy votary of pleasure, who owns her cold duty to a royal husband, we must not forget, that even in the most dissipated courts, the conduct of the queen is expected to be decorous; and that the instances are not rare, where the wife of the monarch has died on the scaffold, or in the dungeon; or in exile, because she dared to be indiscreet, where all were debauched. But for the great majority of royal wives, they exist without a passion; they have nothing to hope—nothing to fear—nothing to envy—nothing to want—nothing to confide—nothing to hate—and nothing to love. Even their duties, though multitudinous, are mechanical; and while they require much attention, occasion no anxiety. Amusement is their moment of greatest emotion, and for them amusement is rare; for amusement is the result of equal companionship. Thus situated, they are doomed to become frivolous in their pursuits, and formal in their manners; and the court chaplain, or the court confessor, is the only person who can prove they have a soul, by convincing them that it will be saved.

The young archduchess had assented to the proposition of marriage with the Crown Prince of Reisenberg without opposition; as she was convinced that requesting her assent, was only a courteous form of requiring her compliance. There was nothing outrageous to her feelings in marrying a man whom she had never seen; because her education, from her tenderest years, had daily prepared her for such an event. Moreover, she was aware that, if she succeeded in escaping from the offers of the Crown Prince of Reisenberg, she would soon be under the necessity of assenting to those of some other suitor; and if proximity to her own country, accordance with its sentiments and manners, and previous connexion with her own house, were taken into consideration, a union with the family of Reisenberg was even desirable. It was to be preferred, at least, to one which brought with it a foreign husband, and a foreign climate; a strange language and strange customs. The archduchess—a girl of ardent feelings and lively mind—had not, however, agreed to become that all-commanding slave—a queen—without a stipulation. She required that she might be allowed, previous to her marriage, to visit her future court, incognito. This singular and unparalleled proposition was not easily

acceded to; but the opposition with which it was received, only tended to make the young princess more determined to be gratified in her caprice. Her imperial highness did not pretend that any end was to be obtained by this unusual procedure, and indeed she had no definite purpose in requesting it to be permitted. It was originally the mere whim of the moment, and had it not been strongly opposed, it would not have been strenuously insisted upon. As it was, the young archduchess persisted, threatened, and grew obstinate; and the gray-headed negotiators of the marriage, desirous of its speedy completion, and not having a more tractable tool ready to supply her place, at length yielded to her bold importunity. Great difficulty, however, was experienced in carrying her wishes into execution. By what means, and in what character she was to appear at court, so as not to excite suspicion or occasion discovery, were often discussed, without being resolved upon. At length it became necessary to consult Mr. Beckendorff. The upper lip of the Prime Minister of Reisenberg, curled, as the imperial minister detailed the caprice and contumacy of the princess; and treating with the greatest contempt this girlish whim, Mr. Beckendorff ridiculed those by whom it had been humoured, with no suppressed derision. The consequence of his conduct was an interview with the future grand-duchess, and the consequence of his interview, an unexpected undertaking on his part to arrange the visit according to her highness's desires.

The archduchess had not yet seen the crown-prince; but six miniatures, and a whole-length portrait had prepared her for not meeting an Adonis, or a Baron Trenck; and that was all—for never had the Correggio of the age of Charles the Fifth, better substantiated his claims to the office of court painter, than by those accurate semblances of his royal highness; in which his hump was subdued into a Grecian bend, and his back-lustre eyes seemed beaming with tenderness and admiration. His betrothed bride stipulated with Mr. Beckendorff, that the fact of her visit should be known only to himself and the grand-duke; and before she appeared at court, she had received the personal pledge, both of himself and his royal highness, that the affair should be kept a complete secret from the crown prince.

Most probably, on her first introduction to her future husband, all the romantic plans of the young archduchess, to excite an involuntary interest in his heart, vanished—but how this may be, it is needless for us to inquire: for that same night introduced another character into her romance, for whom she was perfectly unprepared, and whose appearance totally disorganized its plot.

Her inconsiderate, her unjustifiable conduct, in tampering with that individual's happiness and affection, was what the young haughty archduchess deplored in the most energetic, the most feeling, and the most humble spirit; and anticipating, that after this painful disclosure, they would never meet again, she declared, that for his sake alone she regretted what had passed—and praying that he might be happier than herself, she supplicated to be forgiven, and forgotten.

Vivian read the archduchess's letter over, and over again; and then put it in his breast. At first he thought that he had lived to shed another tear: but he was mistaken. In a few minutes he found himself quite roused from his late overwhining

stupor—quite light-hearted—almost gay. Remorse, or regret for the past—care, or caution for the future, seemed at the same moment to have fled from his mind. He looked up to heaven, with a wild smile—half of despair, and half of defiance. It seemed to imply, that Fate had now done her worst; and that he had at last the satisfaction of knowing himself to be the most unfortunate and unhappy being that ever existed. When a man, at the same time, believes in and sneers at his destiny, we may be sure that he considers his condition past redemption.

CHAPTER II.

THEY stopped for an hour at the next post, according to Essper's suggestion. Indeed, he proposed resting there for the night, for both men and beasts much required repose; but Vivian panted to reach Vienna, to which city two days travelling would now carry him. His passions were so roused, and his powers of reflection so annihilated, that while he had determined to act desperately, he was unable to resolve upon any thing desperate. Whether, on his arrival at the Austrian capital, he should plunge into dissipation, or into the Danube, was equally uncertain. He had some thought of joining the Greeks or Turks—no matter which—probably the latter—or perhaps of serving in the Americas. The idea of returning to England never once entered his mind: he expected to find letters from his father at Vienna, and he almost regretted it; for, in his excessive misery, it was painful to be conscious that a being still breathed, who was his friend.

It was a fine moonlight night, but the road was very mountainous; and in spite of all the encouragement of Vivian, and all the consequent exertions of the postilion, they were upwards of two hours and a half going these eight miles. To get on any farther to-night was quite impossible. Essper's horse was fairly knocked up, and even Max visibly distressed. The post-house was fortunately an inn. It was not at a village; and, as far as the travellers could learn, not near one; and its appearance did not promise very pleasing accommodation. Essper, who had scarcely tasted food for nearly eighteen hours, was not highly delighted with the prospect before them. His anxiety, however, was not merely selfish; he was as desirous that his young master should be refreshed by a good night's rest, as himself; and anticipating that he should have to exercise his skill in making a couch for Vivian in the carriage, he proceeded to cross-examine the post-master on the possibility of his accommodating them. The host was a most pious-looking personage, in a black velvet cap, with a singularly meek and charitable expression of countenance. His long black hair was very exquisitely braided; and he wore round his neck a collar of pewter medallions, all which had been recently sprinkled with holy water, and blessed under the petticoat of the saintly Virgin; for the post-master had only just returned from a pilgrimage to the celebrated shrine of the Black Lady of Altötting.

"Good friend!" said Essper, looking him cunningly in the face; "I fear that we must order horses on: you can hardly accommodate two?"

"Good friend!" answered the innkeeper, and he crossed himself very reverently at the same time: "it is not for man to fear, but to hope."

"If your beds were as good as your adages," said Essper George, laughing, "in good truth, as a friend of mine would say, I would sleep here to-night."

"Prithes, friend," continued the innkeeper, kissing a medal of his collar very devoutly, "what accommodation dost thou lack?"

"Why," said Essper, "in the way of accommodation, little—for two excellent beds will content us; but in the way of refreshment—by St. Hubert! as another friend of mine would swear—he would be a bold man who would engage to be as hungry before his dinner, as I shall be after my supper."

"Friend!" said the innkeeper, "Our Lady forbid that thou shouldst leave our walls to-night; for the accommodation, we have more than sufficient; and as for the refreshment—by holy mass! we had a priest tarry here last night, and he left his rosary behind; I will comfort my soul by telling my beads over the kitchen fire; and for every paternoster my wife shall give thee a rasher of kid, and for every ave a tumbler of Augsburg; which, our Lady forget me, if I did not myself purchase, but yesterday se'ennight, from the pious fathers of the convent of St. Florian!"

"I take thee at thy word, honest sir," said Essper. "By the creed! I liked thy appearance from the first: nor wilt thou find me unwilling, when my voice has taken its supper, to join thee in some pious hymn or holy canticle. And now for the beds!"

"There is the green room—the best bedroom in my house," said the innkeeper. "Holy Mary forget me! if in that same bed have not stretched their legs, more valorous generals, more holy prelates, and more distinguished counsellors of our lord the emperor, than in any bed in all Austria."

"That then for my master,—and for myself!"

"H—u—m!" said the host, looking very earnestly in Essper's face; "I should have thought that thou wert one more anxious after dish and flaggon, than curtain and eider down!"

"By my mother! I love good cheer," said Essper earnestly; "and want it more at this moment than any knave that ever yet starved: but if thou hast not a bed to let me stretch my legs on after four-and-twenty hours' hard riding, by holy Virgin! I will have horses on to Vienna."

"Our Black Lady forbid!" said the innkeeper, with a quick voice, and with rather a dismayed look—"said I that thou shouldst *not* have a bed? St. Florian desert me! if I and my wife would not sooner sleep in the chimney-corner, than that thou shouldst miss one wink of thy slumbers!"

"In one word, have you a bed?"

"Have I a bed! Where slept, I should like to know, the Vice-principal of the convent of Molk, on the day before the last holy Ascension! The waters were out in the morning; and when will my wife forget what his reverence was pleased to say, when he took his leave!—'Good woman!' said he, 'my duty calls me; but the weather is cold; and, between ourselves, I am used to great feasts; and I should have no objection, if I were privileged to stay, and to eat again of thy red cabbage and cream!'—what say you to that? Do you think we have got beds now! You shall sleep to-night, sir, like an Aulic counsellor."

This adroit introduction of the red cabbage and cream settled every thing—when men are wearied and famished, they have no inclination to be incredulous—and in a few moments Vivian was informed by his servant, that the promised accommodation was satisfactory; and having locked up the carriage, and wheeled it into a small out-house, he and Essper were ushered by their host into a room, which, as is usual in small German inns in the south, served at the same time both for kitchen and saloon. The fire was lit in a platform of brick, raised in the centre of the floor:—the sky was visible through the chimney, which, although of a great breadth below, gradually narrowed to the top. A family of wandering Bohemians, consisting of the father and mother, and three children, were seated on the platform when Vivian entered: the man was playing on a coarse wooden harp, without which the Bohemians seldom travel. The music ceased as the new guests came into the room, and the Bohemian courteously offered his place at the fire to our hero; who, however, declined disturbing the family group. A small table and a couple of chairs were placed in a corner of the room by the innkeeper's wife—a bustling, active dame—who apparently found no difficulty in laying the cloth, dusting the furniture, and cooking the supper, at the same time. At this table, Vivian and his servant seated themselves; and, in spite of his misfortunes, Vivian was soon engaged in devouring the often-supplied and savoury rashers of the good woman; nor, indeed, did her cookery discredit the panegyric of the Reverend Vice-principal of the convent of Molk.

Alike wearied in mind and in body, Vivian soon asked for his bed; which, though not exactly fit for an Aulic counsellor, as the good host perpetually avowed it to be, nevertheless afforded very decent accommodation.

The Bohemian family retired to the hay-loft; and Essper George would have followed his master's example had not the kind mistress of the house tempted him to stay behind, by the production of a new platter of rashers; indeed, he never remembered meeting with such hospitable people as the post-master and his wife. They had evidently taken a great fancy to him; and, though extremely wearied, the lively little Essper endeavoured, between his quick mouthfuls and long draughts, to reward and encourage their kindness by many a good story and sharp joke. With all these, both mine host and his wife were exceedingly amused; seldom containing their laughter, and frequently protesting, by the sanctity of various saints, that this was the pleasantest night, and Essper the pleasantest fellow, that they had ever met with.

"Eat, eat, my friend!" said his host; "by the mass! thou hast travelled far; and fill thy glass, and pledge with me our Black Lady of Altötting. By holy cross! I have hung up this week in her chapel a garland of silk roses; and have ordered to be burned before her shrine, three pounds of perfumed wax tapers! Fill again, fill again! and thou too, good mistress; a hard day's work hast thou had—a glass of wine will do thee no harm: join me with our new friend! Pledge we together the Holy Fathers of St. Florian, my worldly patrons, and my spiritual pastors: let us pray that his reverence the sub-prior may not have his Christmas attack of gout in the stomach; and a better health to poor Father Felix! Fill again, fill again! this

Augsbург is somewhat acid; we will have a bottle of Hungary. Mistress, fetch us the bell-glasses, and here to the Reverend Vice-principal of Molk! our good friend: when will my wife forget what he said to her on the morning of the last holy Ascension? Fill again, fill again!"

Inspired by the convivial spirit of the pious and jolly post-master, Essper George soon forgot his threatened visit to his bed-room, and ate and drank, laughed and joked, as if he were again with his friend, Master Rodolph; but wearied nature at length avenged herself for this unnatural exertion; and leaning back in his chair, he was, in the course of an hour, overcome by one of those dead and heavy slumbers, the effect of the united influence of fatigue and intemperance—in short, it was like the midnight sleep of a fox-hunter.

No sooner had our pious votary of the Black Lady of Altötting observed the effect of his Hungary wine, than making a well understood sign to his wife, he took up the chair of Essper in his brawny arms; and preceded by Mrs. Post-mistress with a lantern, he left the room with his guest. Essper's hostess led and lighted the way to an out-house, which occasionally served as a remise, a stable, and a lumber-room. It had no window; and the lantern afforded the only light which exhibited its present contents. In one corner was a donkey tied up, belonging to the Bohemian; and in another a dog, belonging to the post-master. Hearing the whispered voice of his master, this otherwise brawling animal was quite silent. Under a hayrack was a large child's cradle: it was of a very remarkable size, having been made for twins; who to the great grief of the post-master and his lady, departed this life at an early, but promising age. Near it was a very low wooden sheep-tank, half filled with water, and which had been placed there for the refreshment of the dog and his feathered friends—a couple of turkeys, and a considerable number of fowls, who also at present were quietly roosting in the rack.

The pious innkeeper very gently lowered to the ground the chair on which Essper was soundly sleeping; and then, having crossed himself, he took up our friend with great tenderness and solicitude, and dexterously fitted him in the huge cradle. This little change must have been managed with great skill—like all other skill, probably acquired by practice—for overwhelming as was Essper's stupor, it nevertheless required considerable time, nicety, and trouble, to arrange him comfortably on the mouldy mattress of the deceased twins—no very fine was the fit! However, the kind-hearted host had the satisfaction of retiring from the stable, with the consciousness, that the guest, whose company had so delighted him, was enjoying an extremely sound slumber; and fearing the watchful dog might disturb him, he thought it only prudent to take Master Rouseall along with him.

About an hour past midnight, Essper George awoke. He was lying on his back, and excessively unwell; and, on trying to move, he found, to his great astonishment, that he was rocking. Every circumstance of his late adventure was perfectly obliterated from his memory; and the strange movement, united with his peculiar indisposition, left him no doubt that the dream, which was in fact the effect of his intemperance, combined with the rocking of the cradle on the slightest motion, was a melancholy reality; and that what he considered

the greatest evil of life was now his lot—in short that he was on board a ship! As is often the case when we are tipsy or nervous, Essper had been woken by the fright of falling from some immense height; and finding that his legs had no sensation, for they were quite benumbed, he concluded that he had fallen down the hatchway, that his legs were broken, and himself jammed in between some logs of wood in the hold; and so he began to cry lustily to those above, to come down to his rescue. How long he would have continued hailing the neglectful crew, it is impossible to ascertain; but, in the midst of his noisy alarm, he was seized with another attack of sickness, which soon quieted him.

"O, Essper George!" thought he, "Essper George! how came you to set foot on salt timber again? Had you not had enough of it in the Mediterranean and the Turkish seas, that you must be getting aboard this lubberly Dutch galliot! for I am sure she's Dutch, by being so low in the water. How did I get here?—Who am I?—Am I Essper George, or am I not?—Where was I last!—How came I to fall!—O! my poor legs!—How the vessel rocks!—Sick again!—Well they may talk of a sea-life, but for my part, I never even saw the use of the sea—O, Lord! how she rolls—what a heave! I never saw the use of the sea—Many a sad heart has it caused, and many a sick stomach has it occasioned! 'The boldest sailor climbs on board with a heavy soul, and leaps on land with a light spirit.—O! thou indifferent ape of earth! thy houses are of wood, and thy horses of canvass; thy roads have no landmarks, and thy highways no inns; thy hills are green without grass, and wet without showers!—and as for food, what art thou, O, bully ocean! but the stable of horse-fishes, the stall of cow-fishes, the sty of hog-fishes, and the kennel of dog-fishes!—O! commend me to a fresh water dish for meager days!—Seaweed, stewed with chalk, may be savoury stuff for a merman; but, for my part, give me red cabbage and cream: and as for drink, a man may live in the midst of thee his whole life, and die for thirst at the end of it! Besides, thou blasphemous salt lake, where is thy religion? Where are thy churches, thou heretic! Thou wouldst be burnt by the Inquisition, were it not that thy briny water is fit for nothing but to extinguish an Auto-de-Fé. Ah me! would that my legs were on my body again, and that body on terra firma! I am left to perish below, while the rascally surgeon above, is joining with the purser to defraud the Guinea pigs at dice. I'll expose him!" So saying, Essper made a desperate effort to crawl up the hold. His exertions, of course, set the cradle rocking with renewed violence; and at last, dashing with great force against the sheep-tank, that pastoral piece of furniture was upset, and part of its contents poured upon the inmate of the cradle.

"Sprung a leak in the hold, by St. Nicholas!" bawled out Essper George. "Caulkers, a-hoy! a-hoy! Can't you hear, you scoundrels! you stone-hearted ruffians!—a-hevy! a-hoy!—I can't cry, for the life of me! They said I should be used to the rocking after the first month; and here, by the soul of a seaman! I can't even speak! O! the liars, the wicked liars! If the captain expect any thing from me, he is mistaken. I know what I shall do when he comes. 'Captain!' I shall say, 'when you behave like a gentleman, you may expect to be treated as such.'"

At this moment three or four fowls, roused by the fall of the tank, and the consequent shouts of Essper, began fluttering about the rack, and at last perched upon the cradle. "The live stock got loose!" screamed Essper, in a voice of terror, in spite of a new attack of sickness; "the live stock got loose! sprung a-leak! below here! below! below! and the breeze is getting stiffer every instant! Where's the captain? I will see him; I'm not one of the crew: I belong to the court! What court! what am I talking about! One would think that I was drunk. Court indeed! what can I mean! I must have cracked my skull when I fell like a lubber down that confounded hatchway! Court indeed! Egad! I feel as if I had been asleep, and been dreaming I was at court. Well, it's enough to make one laugh, after all! What's that noise! why, here's a jackass in the hold! this is not right—some job of that villainous purser! Well, he's found out at last! Rasher of kid indeed! What business has he to put me off with rashers of kid, and give me sour wine! This is the first voyage that I ever heard of, where a whole crew were fed for months on rashers of kid, and sour wine. O, the villain! is this what he calls doing his duty! is this—why, here are all the turkeys screaming; all the live-stock loose—below here! below! Above deck a-hoy! ye lubbers a-hoy! live-stock loose! sprung a-leak! purser's job! purser has got a jackass—purser's jackass—purser is a j—a-c—k—jack—jack—jack—jack—jackass!" Here our sailor, overcome by his exertions and the motion of his vessel, again fell asleep.

Presently he was awakened, not by the braying of the jackass, nor the screaming of the turkeys, nor the cackling of the chickens! but by the sound of heavy footsteps over his head. These noises were at once an additional proof that he was in the hold, and an additional stimulus to his calls to those on deck. In fact, these sounds were occasioned by the Bohemians, who always rose before break of day; and consequently, in a few minutes, the door of the stable opened, and the Bohemian, with a lantern in his hand, entered.

"Who are you?" hallooed out Essper George, greatly refreshed by his last slumber; "what do you want?" continued he; for the man astounded at hearing a human voice, at first could not reply.

"I want my jackass," he at length said.

"You do," said Essper, "do you? Now a'n't you a pretty fellow? You a purser! A fellow who gives us rashers of kid a whole voyage; nothing but kid, kid, kid, every day! and here are detected keeping a jackass among the poultry! a jackass, of all animals! eating all the food of our live-stock, and we having kid every day—kid, kid, kid! Pray why didn't you come to me before! Why didn't you send the surgeon! Now, a'n't you a scoundrel! Though both my legs are off, I'll have a fling at you!"—and so saying, Essper, aided by the light of the lantern, and with infinite exertion, scrambled out of the cradle, and taking up the sheep-tank, sent it straight at the astonished Bohemian's head. The aim was good, and the man fell; more, however, from fright than injury. Seizing his lantern, which had fallen out of his hand, Essper escaped through the stable-door, and rushed into the house. He found himself in the kitchen. The noise of his entrance roused the landlord and his wife, who had been sleeping by the fire; since, not

having a single bed besides their own, they had given that up to Vivian. The countenance of the innkeeper effectually dispelled the clouds which had been fast clearing off from Essper's intellect. Giving one wide stare, and then rubbing his eyes, the whole truth lighted upon him; and so, being in the humour for flinging, he sent the Bohemian's lantern at his landlord's head. The post-master seized the poker, and the post-mistress a fagot; and as the Bohemian, who had now recovered himself, had entered in the rear, Essper George certainly stood a fair chance of receiving a thorough drubbing: which doubtless he would have got, had not his master, roused by the suspicious noises and angry sounds which had reached his room, entered the kitchen with his pistols. The group is a good one; and I therefore will not disturb it till the next chapter.

CHAPTER III.

As it was now morning, Vivian did not again retire to rest, but took advantage of the disturbance in the inn, to continue his route at an earlier hour than he had previously intended. As he was informed that he would meet with no accommodation for the next fifty or sixty miles, his projected course lying through an extremely mountainous and wild tract in the vicinity of the Lake of Gmunden, he was fain to postpone his departure, until he and his attendant had procured their breakfasts; and moreover, willingly acceded to a suggestion of the post-master, of taking with him a small basket, containing some slight refreshment for their "noon meal." Accordingly the remnants of their breakfast, a cold fowl—a relation of the live-stock which had so terribly disturbed Essper during the night—some fruit, and a bottle of thin white wine, were packed by the dapper post-mistress in a neat little basket. The horses were now put to, and nothing remained to be done, but to discharge the innkeeper's bill. The conduct of mine host and his good wife, had been so exceedingly obliging—for Vivian had not even listened to Essper's complaint, treating the whole affair as a drunken brawl—that Vivian had nearly made up his mind to waive the ceremony of having a regular bill presented to him; and feeling that the greatest charge which the post-master could make for his accommodation, could not reward him for his considerate conduct, he was on the point of making him a very handsome present, when the account was sent in. To Vivian's astonishment, he found that the charge exceeded, by about five times as much, the amount of his intended, and, as he had considered it, rather extravagant gratuity. The first item was for apartments—a saloon, and two best bed-chambers! Then came Vivian's light supper, figuring as a dinner pour un maitre; and as for Essper George's feed, it was inserted under two different heads, "servant's dinner," and "servant's supper:" the retirement of Vivian from the smoky kitchen, having been the event which distinguished the moment when the first meal had terminated, and the second commenced. More ceremonious accuracy could not have been displayed in settling the boundaries of *two empires* or deciding the commencement of the *Sabbath*. And as for wine, the thin Augsburg, though charged by the dozen, did not cost as much as the Hungary, charged by the bottle. It appeared

by the bill also, that there had been no slight breakage of bell-glasses, nor was the sheep-tank, minus a leg by the overthrow of the Bohemian, forgotten; but looked imposing under the title of "injured bed-room furniture." Vivian scarcely got as far as their breakfasts, but even their excessive price passed from his mind, when his eye lighted on the enormous item which entitled them to the basket of provisions. It would have supported the poor Bohemians for a year.

Our hero's indignation was excessive, particularly as he now felt it his duty to listen to Essper's bitter complaints. Vivian contented himself, however, with returning the account of Essper to the post-master, who took care not to be in his customer's presence; informing mine host that there was some little mistake in his demand, and requesting him to make out a new charge. But the character of the pious, loquacious, complaisant, and convivial innkeeper, seemed suddenly to have undergone a very strange revolution. He had become sullen, and silent; listened to Vivian's message with imperturbable composure, and then refused to reduce his charge one single kreutzer.

Vivian, whose calm philosophy had received rather a rude shock since his last interview with Mr. Beckendorff, and who was not therefore in the most amiable of humours, did not now conceal his indignation; nor, as far as words could make an impression, spare the late object of his intended generosity. That pious person bore his abuse like a true Christian; crossing himself at every opprobrious epithet that was heaped upon him, with great reverence, and kissing a holy medal of his blessed necklace whenever his guests threatened vengeance and anticipated redress. But no word escaped the whole time from the mouth of the spiritual protégé of the Holy Fathers of St. Florian: pale and pig-headed, he bore all with that stubborn silence, which proved him no novice in such scenes; and not even our Black Lady of Altötting was called upon to interfere in his favour, or to forgive, or forget, his innocent imposition. But his mild, and active, and obliging wife amply compensated, by her reception of our hero's complaints, for the rather uncourteous conduct of her husband. With arms a-kimbo, and flashing eyes, the vixen poured forth a volley of abuse both of Vivian and his servant, which seemed to astonish even her experienced husband. To leave the house without satisfying the full demand was impossible; for the demandant, being post-master, could of course prevent the progress of his victim. In this state of affairs, irritated and defied, Vivian threatened to apply to the judge of the district. His threat bore with it no terror: and imagining that the post-master reckoned that his guest was merely blustering, Vivian determined to carry the business through; and asked of a few idle persons who were standing around, which of them would show him the way to the judge of the district.

"I will myself attend your highness," said the innkeeper, with a bow of insolent politeness.

Vivian, however, did not choose to rely upon the post-master's faith; and so, attended by a young peasant, and followed at a few yards' distance by their host, he and Essper proceeded to find the judge of the district. The judge lived at a small village two miles up the country; but even this did not daunt our hero, who, in spite of the meet and constant smile of his host, bade his guide lead a

Half an hour brought them to the hamlet. They proceeded down the only street which it contained, until they came to a rather large, but most dilapidated house, which their guide informed them was the residence of the judge. The great front gates being evidently unused, they rang the rusty bell at a small white door at the side of the mansion; and in a short time it was opened by a hard-working Austrian wench, who stared very much at the emerald, as if she were but little accustomed to the admission of suitors. She bade them follow her down the court. Passing a heavy casement window, thickly overshadowed by a vine, she opened a door into a small and gloomy room, and the party entered under the solemn presence of the district judge. His worship was seated at a table, on which a few very ancient and dusty papers attempted to produce a show of business. He was earnestly engaged with his chocolate, and wore a crimson velvet cap, with a broad fur border, and a very imposing tassel. I need not describe his appearance very minutely—his worship being an individual whom we have had the honour of meeting with before; he being no less a personage than that dignified, economical, convivial, and most ill-treated judge from the Danube, whose unlucky adventure about the bottle of Rudesheimer was detailed in an early chapter of these volumes; and who it will be recollected was, at that time, if more good-humouredly, scarcely more courteously, treated by one of the present complainants, Essper George, than by his brutal boon companions—the University students.

"Pray, gentlemen, be seated: take a chair, sir!" said his worship as he raised himself on his elbows, staring in Vivian's face.—"H—u—u—m!" growled the fat judge, as he perceived the innkeeper standing on the threshold.—"Come in there, and shut the door. Well, gentlemen what is your pleasure?"

Vivian very temperately and briefly detailed the occasion of his visit. The judge listened in profound silence; his pouting lips and contracted brow making it difficult to ascertain whether he were thoughtful or sulky. The innkeeper did not attempt to interrupt the complainant during his statement, at least not by speech; but kept up a perpetual commentary on the various charges, by repeatedly crossing himself, sighing, and lifting up his hands and eyes, as much as to say, "What iars men are!" and then humbly throwing out his arms, and bending his head, he seemed to forgive their mendacity, and at the same time, trust that Heaven would imitate his example. While this scene was acting, Essper George got wound up to such a pitch of frenzy, between the injustice which he considered his master was doing to their case, the hypocritical gesticulations of the defendant, and the restraint laid upon his perpetual interference by Vivian, and the looks of the judge; that he could only be compared to a wild cat in a cage, hissing, pitting, threatening with his pawing hands, and setting up his back, as if he were about to spring upon his adversary and throttle him.

"Now!" said the judge sternly to the post-master, "what have you to say? How can you answer yourself for treating a foreign gentleman in this manner?"

"St. Florian be my help!" said mine host with downcast eyes, "I am confounded: this worthy gentleman has most unaccountably deceived him-
self. Our Lady be my guide, while I speak the

truth! Late last night this noble traveller and his worthy attendant arrived at our poor dwelling. I was busying myself to get horses for his carriage, when the gentleman complained of so much illness and fatigue, that his servant entreated me to strive to give him accommodation for the night. Indeed, poor gentlemen! it is no wonder they were fatigued; for the young man himself, as he will bear witness for me," said the speaker, pointing to Essper "declared, that for four-and-twenty hours he had scarcely been off his horse; and had not, in that time, tasted food!"

"Yes! that was when you promised me the bed which the Vice-principal of Molk slept in," said Essper, stamping with such violence, that the old judge started with fright, and dropped his spoon! His worship looked angrily round, and Vivian again commanded Essper to be silent.

"Go on with your story," said the judge to the defendant.

"Hear me speak, your worship," said Essper; "he'll never have done. When once a man begins lying, he'll tell the truth on Tuesday se'ennight. The whole affair is this—"

"This person must be kept silent," said the judge. "You go on," continued he, pointing to the innkeeper, who was crossing himself most devoutly.

"The Mother of Mercy forgive me!" said the innkeeper, "if I have said aught unconsciously to hurt the feelings of any fellow-Christian. If the tale told me were untrue, is it my fault that I gave it credit? My wife and I, pitying their sad condition, determined to exert ourselves for their relief. Our house, by the blessing of St. Florian, was filled. A respectable Bohemian family, who, from the treatment they have invariably received, consider our house their home, had taken up their lodgings with us for the night. Of a verity, we had no beds remaining, except the one in which I and my wife repose ourselves after our hard day's labour; and another which was made on purpose for, and scarcely ever used by any persons, except our two dear and lamented children!"

"A mouldy cradle!" bawled Essper George.

"Our two lovely children slept together in it!" said the innkeeper, with a softened voice and a starting tear.

"A crib, I suppose?" said the judge.

"Verily a large sized crib! Excuse this emotion," said mine host, swallowing a sob; "it is a subject on which I unwillingly dwell."

In this manner were nearly two hours occupied; the pious post-master calmly and charitably explaining his conduct, defending himself against every count of the indictment, and never once giving way to an irritable expression, although constantly interrupted and abused by Essper George; whose rage and mortification, at the complexion which the history of his ill-treatment was assuming before the judge, exceeded all bounds.

"Gentlemen!" said the judge, when the innkeeper had finished, "it appears to me that this poor man's case has been a little misunderstood by you. In the first place, it seems, that far from desiring you to stay under his roof, your lodging there must have put him to very serious inconvenience. I find that his wife, who had been hard worked the whole day, and was, moreover, far from being in strong health, was obliged to give

up her bed for the accommodation of her unexpected guest; and what more could your servant desire, than the bed in which their own children were accustomed to repose? As to the charge for your meals, and wine, and the basket of provisions, you are little aware at how much cost and labour we, who live among these mountains, procure even the commonest provisions, now rendered doubly scarce by the excessive heat and drought of the season. (Here the judge poured out another cup of chocolate.) Remember, also, that this is not a large city, and that we are obliged to provide at the beginning of the week for the wants of the remainder. You have probably, therefore, deprived this poor family of their sustenance for six days to come. Consider, also, that it was not necessary for the post-master to put himself to the expense of living in so large a house, and that it was entirely for the accommodation of respectable families travelling from Bohemia and Bavaria, and other places, that he has incurred the cost of maintaining this establishment! It is only fair, therefore, that you should properly remunerate him for the conveniences which, in such a country, you could hardly have expected to find, and for the extraordinary risk incurred by this hazardous investment of his capital. Respecting the treatment of which you complain, from his wife, I put it to your own feelings, as a gentleman, whether great allowance should not be made in a case where such exertions and sacrifices may have produced a slight degree of irritability and discomposure—the natural result of female delicacy and overpowering fatigue. For her husband, the present defendant, I should feel I was not discharging my duty, if I did not declare that this is the first time I have heard word of complaint against him by man, woman, or child; and if I were called upon to pick out the most civil, obliging, conscientious, liberal, charitable, unassuming, and thoroughly honest, and truly pious man, within my district, it is this worthy person whom I now see before me: and whose demand I feel it incumbent upon me to insist shall this moment be satisfied. My clerk is not in the way just now, but his fee you may leave upon the table: it is twenty per cent. upon the amount of the disputed sum. There is also one dollar due for the warrant; which, though not issued in the present instance, must be accounted for to government.”

Vivian threw down the sum in disgust, without deigning to reply; but Essper George was not so dignified. His rage was ludicrously excessive.

“I knew it would end so! You would not let me speak. Don’t pay, sir—don’t pay! The fat rascal is the worst of the two; and whenever I prosecute a person for stealing clothes off a naked man, or a beard from a child’s elbow, I’ll bring them before you, and they shall be found guilty!”

“Fellow!” said the magistrate, “do you know who I am?”

“Know you?” screamed Essper, with a malicious laugh: “know you? The very sight of you does my heart good. How did that Rudesheimer at Colbentz agree with you? I think you got a glass when the bottle was empty! O you old cheat! this is not the first time that you have wanted to make honest travellers pay for what they did not order! shame! shame!”

“You loose-tongued rascal!” said the agonized and choking magistrate, as he shuffled back his

chair, and threw his cup of chocolate at Essper’s head. The knave, however, skilfully avoided it, and ran down the court after his master. His agility baffled the exertions of the gouty judge, who, thinking he was fairly rid of his tormentor, determined to forget his mortification in his percentage. He had just reseated himself in his easy chair, and was spinning the dollar on his thumb, revelling in his speculation, when Essper pushed his head in at the opened casement.

“I forgot one thing!” said he, in an exulting whisper: “pray—how is your—grandfather!”

CHAPTER IV.

THIS unsuccessful appeal to justice cost Vivian almost as many golden hours as it had golden sovereigns. At length, however, his carriage drove off. His host neither showed pique at his opposition, nor triumph at his defeat: he was just as pious and polite as on the evening of their arrival, and crossed himself, and bowed to his departing guest, with emulative fervour. His wife, however, standing in the window, testified her exultation by clapping her hands and laughing as the carriage went off.

The postilion drove so well, that Essper had difficulty in keeping up with the horses; particularly as, when he had found himself safely mounted, he had lagged behind a few minutes to vent his spleen against the innkeeper’s wife.

“May St. Florian confound me, madam!” said Essper, addressing himself to the lady in the window, “if ever I beheld so ugly a witch as yourself Pious friend! thy chaplet of roses was ill bestowed; and thou needest not have travelled so far to light thy wax tapers at the shrine of the Black Lady! Altogether, for, by the beauty of holiness! an image of ebony is mother of pearl to that soot-face whom thou callest thy wife. Fare thee well! the couple of saintly sinners; and may the next traveller who tarries in thy den of thieves, qualify thee for canonization by thy wife’s admiring paste the cabbage-eating Vice-principal of Molk.”

The postilion blew his horn with unusual spirit to announce the arrival of a traveller of consequence, at the next post-house; and Vivian, by the mortification of being whirled up to the gateway of a large and well-appointed inn, situated in the high street of a smart-looking little town. The consciousness that he had been seduced into staying at the miserable place where he had passed the night, under the pretence that there was no better accommodation within fifty miles, the sight of a costly basket of broken victuals, and the recollection of the expense of time and money which he had incurred through his credulity, were calculated to render his mood the most amiable. The postilion, perhaps observing a cloud upon his brow, and anticipating that he might suffer for his master’s villany, bowed very low when he came up to the door of the carriage to be paid, and trusted most respectfully that his drink-money would not be diminished for any thing that had happened. “I was very sorry, sir,” continued he, “for what took place with my master; but I could do nothing, sir: I could not drive you without an order. I am sorry to say, it is nothing particular, sir. It wasn’t much use your troubling y-

self to go to the judge, for he always sides with master. Master married his sister, sir?"

While Vivian was speaking to the postilion, he heard the sound of a hammer behind the carriage; and, on looking round, perceived a man busily employed in working at one of the springs. This fellow was one of those officious smiths, who, on the Continent, regularly commence, without permission or necessity, their operations upon every carriage which drives up to the post-house. Vivian, convinced that his calèche did not, or ought not, to require the exercise of this artist's talents, after much trouble and some high talking, prevented him from proceeding. The man, however, tendered a demand for services which ought to have been performed, or ought to have been required. It was always the custom, he said, in that town, to have carriages examined and repaired; and if his highness's did not require his attention, it was not his fault. He was ready to repair the carriage—it ought to have been broken. Vivian, of course, refused to satisfy the fellow's insolent demand; and begged to assure him, that he was not one of those English lords, whom, evidently, the considerate smith was in the habit of practising upon. The man retired grumbling, with a most gloomy face.

On they went again, but not quite as comfortably as before: either the road was much worse, or the smith had been right in supposing that something was displaced. In the course of an hour Vivian was obliged to desire the postilion to drive carefully; and before the end of another, they had to ford a rivulet, running between two high banks. The scenery just here was particularly lovely, and Vivian's attention was so engrossed by it, that he did not observe the danger which he was about to incur.

As this scene is important to the narrative, I shall describe it with great accuracy, and I hope that it will be understood.

On the left of the road, a high range of rocky mountains abruptly descended into an open, but broken country; and on the other side of the road was occasionally bounded by low undulating hills, partially covered with dwarf woods, not high enough to obstruct the view of the distant horizon. Rocky knolls jutted out near the base of the mountains; and on the top of one of them, overlooked by a gigantic gray peak, stood an ancient and still inhabited feudal castle. Round the base of this insulated rock, a rustic village peeped above the encircling nut-woods—its rising smoke softening the hard features of the naked crag. On the side of the village nearest to Vivian, a bold sheet of water discharged itself in three separate falls, between the ravine of a wooded mountain; and flowing round the village as a fine broad river, expanded, before it reached the foundation of the castled rock, into a long and deep lake, which was also fed by numerous streams, the gulleys only of which were now visible down the steep sides of the mountains—their springs having been long dried up.

Vivian's view was interrupted by his sudden descent into the bed of the rivulet, one of the numerous branches of the mountain torrent, and by a crash which as immediately ensued. Through the unpaid assistance of the rejected smith, the spring of his carriage was broken, and various loosened nuts jolted out. The carriage of course fell over, but Vivian sustained no injury; and while Essper George rode forward to the village for assistance, his master helped the postilion to extricate the

horses and secure them on the opposite bank. They had done all that was in their power some time before Essper returned; and Vivian, who had seated himself on some tangled beech roots, was prevented growing impatient by contemplating the enchanting scenery. The postilion, on the contrary, who had travelled this road every day of his life, and who found no gratification in gazing upon rocks, woods, and waterfalls, lit his pipe, and occasionally talked to his horses. So essential an attribute of the beautiful is novelty! Essper at length made his appearance, attended by five or six peasants, all dressed in holiday costume, with some fanciful decorations; their broad hats wreathed with wild flowers, their short brown jackets covered with buttons and fringe, and various-coloured ribands streaming from their knees.

"Well, sir! the grandson is born the day the grandfather dies! a cloudy morning has often a bright sunset! and though we are now sticking in a ditch, by the aid of St. Florian, we may be soon feasting in a castle! Come, come, my merry men, I did not bring you here to show your ribands—the sooner you help us out of this scrape, the sooner you will be again dancing with the pretty maidens on the green! Lend a hand! lend a hand! What's your name?" asked Essper, of a sturdy red-haired lad; "Wolf! if it is not, it ought to be; and so, Mr. Wolf, put your shoulder to this fore-wheel, and you two go to the off-wheel, and Master Robert, as I think they call you, help me here! Now, all lift together—Ho-i-g-h! ho-i-g-h! sharp there, behind! once more—ho-i-g-h! pull—pull—pull!—there! gently, gently, that's it!"

The calèche appeared to be so much shattered, that they only ventured to put in one horse; and Vivian, leaving his carriage in charge of Essper and the postilion, mounted Max, and rode to the village, attended by the peasants. He learned from them, on the way, that they were celebrating the marriage of the daughter of their lord; who, having been informed of the accident, had commanded them to go immediately to the gentleman's assistance, and then conduct him to the castle. Vivian immediately made some excuse for not accepting their master's hospitable invitation, and requested to be shown to the nearest inn. He learned, to his dismay, that the village did not boast a single one; the existence of such an establishment not being permitted by their lord, who, however, was always most happy to entertain any stranger at his castle. As his calèche was decidedly too much injured to proceed farther that day, Vivian had evidently, from the account of these persons, no alternative; and therefore allowed himself to be introduced according to their instructions.

They crossed the river over a light stone bridge of three arches, the key-stone of the centre one being decorated with a very splendidly sculptured shield.

"This bridge appears to be very recently built," said Vivian to one of his conductors.

"It was opened, sir, for the first time, yesterday, to admit the bridegroom of my young lady, and the foundation-stone of it was laid on the day she was born."

"I see that your good lord was determined that it should be a solid structure."

"Why, sir, it was necessary that the foundation should be strong, because three succeeding winters it was washed away by the rush of that mountain

torrent.—Turn this way, if you please, sir, through the village.”

Vivian was much struck with the appearance of the little settlement as he rode through it. It did not consist of more than fifty houses, but they were all detached, and each beautifully embowered in trees. The end of the village came upon a large rising-green, leading up to the only accessible side of the castle. It presented a most animated scene, being covered with various groups, all intent upon different rustic amusements. An immense pole, the stem of a gigantic fir-tree, was fixed nearly in the centre of the green, and crowned with a chapel—the reward of the most active young man of the village, whose agility might enable him to display his gallantry, by presenting it to his mistress; she being allowed to wear it during the remainder of the sports. The middle-aged men were proving their strength by raising weights; while the elders of the village joined in the calmer and more scientific diversion of skittles, which, in Austria, are played with bowls and pins of very great size. Others were dancing; others sitting under tents, chattering or taking refreshments. Some were walking in pairs, anticipating the speedy celebration of a wedding-day—happier to them, if less gay to others. Even the tenderest infants, on this festive day, seemed conscious of some unusual cause of excitement; and many an urchin, throwing himself forward in a vain attempt to catch an elder brother or a laughing sister, tried the strength of his leading-strings, and rolled over, crowing, in the soft grass.

At the end of the green a splendid tent was erected, with a large white bridal-flag waving from its top, embroidered in gold, with a true-lover's knot. From this pavilion came forth, to welcome the strangers, the lord of the village. He was an extremely tall, but very thin bending figure, with a florid benevolent countenance, and a great quantity of long white hair. This venerable person cordially offered his hand to Vivian, regretted his accident, but expressed much pleasure that he had come to partake of their happiness. “Yesterday,” continued he, “was my daughter's wedding-day, and both myself and our humble friends are endeavouring to forget, in this festive scene, our approaching loss and separation. If you had come yesterday, you would have assisted at the opening of my new bridge. Pray, what do you think of it? But I will show it to you myself, which I assure you will give me great pleasure; at present, let me introduce you to my family, who will be quite delighted to see you. It is a pity that you have missed the regatta; my daughter is just going to reward the successful candidate: you see the boats upon the lake; the one with the white and purple streamer was the conqueror. You will have the pleasure, too, of seeing my son-in-law: I am sure you will like him—he quite enjoys our sports. We shall have a fête champêtre to-morrow, and a dance on the green to-night.”

The old gentleman paused for want of breath, and having stood a moment to recover himself, he introduced his new guest to the inmates of the tent: first, his maiden sister, a softened fac-simile of himself; behind her stood his beautiful and blushing daughter, the youthful bride, wearing on her head a coronal of white roses, and supported by three bride's-maids, the only relief to whose snowy dresses were large bouquets on their left side. The

bridegroom was at first shaded by the curtain; but, as he came forward, Vivian started when he recognised his Heidelberg friend, Eugene von Konigstein!

Their mutual delight and astonishment were so great, that for an instant neither of them could speak; but when the old man learned from his son-in-law, that the stranger was his most valued and intimate friend, and one to whom he was under the greatest personal obligations, he absolutely declared that he would have the wedding—to witness which appeared to him the height of human felicity—solemnized over again. The bride blushed, the bride's-maids tittered; the joy was universal.

“My dear sister!” said the old lord, hawking very loud in her ear; “very likely your deafness prevented you understanding that this gentleman is Eugene's particular friend. Poor dear!” continued he, lowering his tone; “it is a great misfortune to be so very deaf!”

“I dare say you will soon perceive, sir,” said the old lady to Vivian, while his lordship was speaking, “that my dear brother is debarred, in a great degree, from enjoying your society, by his unfortunate deafness: he scarcely ever hears even what I say to him; though he has been accustomed to my voice so many years. Poor creature, it is a great denial to him!”

It was quite curious to observe how perfectly unconscious were this excellent pair of their own infirmity, though quite alive to each other's.

Vivian inquired after the baron. He learned from Eugene that he had quitted Europe about a month ago, having sailed as minister to one of the new American states. “My uncle,” continued the young man, “was neither well, nor in spirits before his departure: I cannot understand why he plagues himself so about politics; however, I trust he will like his new appointment; you found him, I am sure, a most delightful companion!”

“Come! you two young gentlemen,” said the father-in-law, “put off your chat till the evening. The business of the day stops; for I see the procession coming forward to receive the regatta prize. Now, my dear! where is the scarf?—You know what to say! Remember, I particularly wish to do honour to the victor! The sight of all these happy faces makes me feel quite young again. I declare I think I shall live a hundred years!”

The procession advanced. First came a band of young children strewing flowers; then followed four stout boys carrying a large purple and white banner. The victor, proudly preceding the other candidates, strutted forward, with his hat on one side, a light scull decorated with purple and white ribands in his right hand, and his left arm round his wife's waist. The wife, a beautiful young woman, to whom were clinging two fat flaxen-headed children, was the most interesting figure in the procession. Her tight dark bodice set off her round full figure, and her short red petticoat displayed her springy foot and ankle. Her neatly braided and plaited hair was partly concealed by a silk cap, covered with gold-spangled gauze, flattened rather at the top, and finished at the back of the head with a large bow. This costly head-gear, the highest fashion of her class, was presented to the wearer by the bride, and was destined to be kept for festive. After the victor and his wife, came six girls and six boys, at the side of whom walked a very bustling

ge in black, who seemed extremely interested in the decorum of the procession. A long line of villagers succeeded.

"Well!" said the old lord to Vivian, "this must be a gratifying sight to you! how fortunate your carriage broke down just at my castle! my dear girl is acquitting herself admirably. Eugene is a happy fellow; and I have no doubt that she will be happy too. The young lady receives his honours very properly: they are nice a family as I know. Observe, they are off now to make way for the pretty girls!" That person in black is our abbé—sacred, worthy a creature as ever lived! and ever too: you'll see in a minute. Now I am going to give us a little bridal chorus, after the fashion; and it is all the abbé's doing. I and that there is an elegant allusion to my age in it, which I think will please you. I never thought that bridge would be opened for the wedding! Well! I am glad that it was shed before. But we must be silent! You will notice that part about the bridge; it is in the style, I am told; beginning with something of the lymen, and ending with something about

his time the procession had formed a semi-circle before the tent; the abbé standing in the middle with a paper in his hand, and dividing the ranks of choristers. He gave a signal with his hand, and the girls commenced:—

Chorus of Maidens.

fly! it is Morn: she has left the bed of
she follows him with a strained eye, when
he is no longer seen: she leans her head
on her arm. She is faithful to him, as the lake
mountain!

Chorus of Youths.

fly! it is Noon: fierce is the restless sun!
he labours, he thinks of her! while he
others, he will obey her! A strong man
by love, is like a vineyard silvered by the

Chorus of Youths and Maidens.

fly! it is Eve: the soft star lights him to
she meets him as his shadow falls on
shold! she smiles, and their child, stretch-
its tender hands from its mother's bosom,
to its lisp "Father!"

Chorus of Maidens.

glide! it is Youth: they sit within a
tower. Purity is in her raptured eyes—
his warm embrace. He must fly! He
is farewell: the fresh tears are on her
cheek. He has gathered a lily with the dew upon
its leaves!

Chorus of Youths.

glide! it is Manhood. He is in the fierce
he is in the deceitful court. He must min-
utes with others, that he may be always
right! In the false world, she is to him like a
stone among rocks!

Chorus of Youths and Maidens.

glide! it is Old Age. They sit beneath
the living elm. As the moon rises on the sun-
set, their children dance before them! Her

hand is in his; they look upon their children, and
then upon each other!

"The fellow has some fancy," said the old lord,
"but given, I think, to conceits. I did not exactly
catch the passage about the bridge, but I have no
doubt it was all right."

Vivian was now invited to the pavilion, where
refreshments were prepared. Here our hero was
introduced to many other guests, relations of the
family, who were on a visit at the castle, and who
had been on the lake at the moment of his arrival.

"This gentleman," said the old lord, pointing to
Vivian, "is my son's most particular friend, and I
am quite sure that you are all delighted to see him.
He arrived here quite accidentally—his carriage
having fortunately broken down in passing one
of the streams. All those rivulets should have
bridges built over them! A single arch would do:
—one bold single arch; of the same masonry as
my new bridge, with a very large key-stone, and
the buttresses of the arch rounded, so that the
water should play against them—no angles to be
eaten, and torn, and crumbled away. A fine
bridge, with the arches well proportioned, and the
key-stones bold, and the buttresses well rounded, is
one of the grandest and most inspiring sights I
know. I could look at my new bridge forever.
I often ask myself, 'Now how can such a piece of
masonry ever be destroyed?' It seems quite im-
possible; does not it? We all know—experience
teaches us all—that every thing has an end; and
yet, whenever I look at that bridge, I often think
that it can only end when all things end. I will
take you over it myself, Mr. Grey: it is not fair,
because you came a day too late, that you should
miss the finest sight of all. If you had only been
here yesterday, I am sure you would have said it
was the happiest day in your life!"

The old gentleman proceeded to give Vivian a
long description of the ceremony. He was terribly
disappointed, and equally annoyed, when he found
that our hero could not be present at the festivities
of the morrow. At first my lord was singularly
deaf; he could not conceive the bare idea of the
possibility of any person wishing to leave him at
the present moment; but when his guest assured,
and finally, by frequent repetition, made him un-
derstand, that nothing but the most peremptory
business could command, under such circumstances,
his presence at Vienna; the old gentleman, a great
stickler for duty, and a great respecter of public
business, which he had persuaded himself could
alone prevail upon Vivian to make such a sacrifice,
kindly commiserated his situation; and consoled
him by saying, that he thought he was the most
unlucky fellow with whom he ever had the plea-
sure of being acquainted. "To come just one day
after the bridge! and then to go off just the morn-
ing before the fête champêtre! It is very hard for
you! I quite pity you; don't you, my dear sis-
ter?" bawled he to the old lady. "But what is
the use of speaking to her, poor dear! it is a great
misfortune to be so very deaf! It seems to me
that she gets worse every day."

"I am glad, sir," said the old lady to Vivian,
seeing that she was spoken to; "I am glad that
we shall have the pleasure of your company at the
fête to-morrow. My dear brother!" bawled she to
the old gentlemen, "you feel, I am sure, very
happy that Eugene's friend has arrived so for-

tunately to participate in the pleasures of the fête. But what is the use of speaking to him! poor creature! it is a great denial to him to be so very deaf! I fear it gains on him hourly!"

In the evening they all waltzed upon the green. The large yellow moon had risen; and a more agreeable sight, than to witness two or three hundred persons so gayly occupied, and in such a scene, is not easy to imagine. How beautiful was the stern old castle, softened by the moonlight, the illumined lake, the richly silvered foliage of the woods, and the white brilliant cataract!

Vivian waltzed with the bride, little qualified as he now was to engage in the light dance! But to refuse the distinguished honour was impossible; and so, in spite of his misery, he was soon spinning on the green. The mockery, however, could not be long kept up; and pleading overwhelming fatigue, from late travelling, and gently hinting to Eugene, that from domestic circumstances the present interesting occasion could alone have justified him in the slightest degree joining in any thing which bore the appearance of lightness and revelry, he left the green.

His carriage was now being repaired by the castle smith; and by the advice and with the assistance of the old lord, he had engaged the brother of the family steward, who was a voiturier, about to set off for Vienna the next morning, to take charge of his equipage and luggage, as far as Burkesdorf, which was about ten miles from Vienna. At that place Vivian and Essper were also to arrive on the afternoon of their second day's journey. They would there meet the carriage, and get into Vienna before dusk.

As the castle was quite full of visitors, its hospitable master apologized to Vivian for lodging him for the night, at the cottage of one of his favourite tenants. Nothing could give greater pleasure to Vivian than this circumstance, nor more annoyance to the worthy old gentleman.

The cottage belonged to the victor in the regatta, who himself conducted the visitor to his dwelling. Vivian did not press Essper's leaving the revellers, so great an acquisition did he seem to their sports! Teaching them a thousand new games, and playing all manner of antics; but perhaps none of his powers surprised them more, than the extraordinary facility and freedom with which he had acquired, and used all their names. The cottager's pretty wife had gone home an hour before her husband, to put her two fair-haired children to bed, and prepare her guest's accommodation for the night. Nothing could be more romantic and lovely than the situation of the cottage. It stood just on the gentle slope of the mountain's base, not a hundred yards from the lower waterfall. It was in the middle of a patch of highly cultivated ground, which bore creditable evidence to the industry of its proprietor. Fruit trees, Turkey corn, vines, and flax, flourished in the greatest luxuriance. The dwelling itself was covered with myrtle and arbutus, and the tall lemon plant perfumed the window of the sitting-room. The casement of Vivian's chamber opened full on the foaming cataract. The distant murmur of the mighty waterfall, the gentle sighing of the trees, the soothing influence of the moonlight, and the faint sounds occasionally caught of dying revelry—the joyous exclamation of some successful candidate in the day's games, the song of some returning lover, the splash of an oar in the

lake—all combined to produce that pensive in which we find ourselves involuntarily rev the history of our life.

As Vivian was musing over the last months of his burthensome existence, he could help feeling that there was only one person world on whom his memory could dwell with solace and satisfaction; and this person was Madeleine Trevor!

It was true that with her he had passed most agonizing hours; but he could not for angelic resignation with which her own af had been borne; and the soothing converse by his had been alleviated. This train of thought pursued till his aching mind was sunk into finiteness. He sat, for some little time, unconscious of existence, till the crying of a waked by its father's return, brought him to the present scene. His thoughts naturally his friend Eugene. Surely this youthful groom might reckon upon happiness! Again Madeleine recurred to him. Suddenly he observed a wonderful appearance in the sky. The was pale in the high heavens, and surrounded luminous rings—almost as vividly tinted rainbow—spreading, and growing fainter, it covered nearly half the firmament. It was rious, and almost unprecedented halo!

CHAPTER V.

THE sun rose red, the air was thick and Anticipating that the day would be very oppressive Vivian and Essper were on their horses' back early hour. Already, however, many of the revellers were about, and preparations were making for the fête champêtre, which this day closed the wedding festivities. Many and sad were looks which Essper George cast behind him, old castle on the lake. "No good luck car of it!" said he to his horse; for Vivian discouraged conversation. "O! master of when wilt thou know the meaning of good things! To leave such a place, and at such a Why, Turripurva was nothing to it! Till before marriage, and the hour before death, is a man thinks least of his purse, and most neighbour.—And where are we going! I ask other night in a cradle: and, for aught I know may sleep this one in a coffin! I, who am a little fit for rough riding, and rough eating rough sleeping, as a pet monkey with a tail! O! man, man, what art thou, that thou of a girl can make thee so pass all discretion thou wilt sacrifice for the whim of a moment cheer enough to make thee last an age!"

Vivian had intended to stop and breakfast riding about ten miles; but he had not professed that way, when, from the extreme sultriness the morning, he found it impossible to do without refreshment. Max, also, to his surprise, was much distressed; and on turning to his servant, Vivian found Essper's back up and puffing, and breaking out, as if, instead of mencing their day's work, they were near reaching their point of destination.

"Why, how now, Essper! One would think we had been riding all night. What is the matter?"

"In truth, sir, that which ails its rider; the poor dumb brute has more sense than some—not exactly brutes,—who have the gift of speech. Who ever heard of a horse leaving good quarters without much regretting the indiscretion; and seeing such promising road as this before him, without much striving to retrace his steps? Is there marvel, your highness?"

"The closeness of the air is so oppressive, that I do not wonder at even Max being distressed. Perhaps when the sun is higher, and has cleared away the vapours, it may be more endurable; as it is, I think we had better stop at once and breakfast here. His wood is as inviting as, I trust, are the contents of your basket!"

"St. Florian devour them!" said Essper, in a pious voice, "if I agree not with your highness; and as for the basket, although we have left no hand of milk and honey, by the blessing of our Lady! I have that within it, which would put courage in the heart of a caught mouse. Although we may not breakfast on bride-cake and beccaficos, it is a neat's tongue better than a fox's tail; and have ever held a bottle of Rehnuish to be superior rain-water, even though the element be filtered through a gutter. Nor, by all saints! have I forgotten a bottle of kerchen wasser, from the Black rest; nor a keg of Dantzic brandy, a glass of which, when travelling at night, I am ever accustomed to take after my prayers; for I have always served, that though devotion doth sufficiently warm up the soul, the body all the time is rather colder for stooping under a tree to tell its beads." The travellers, accordingly, led their horses a few yards into the wood, and soon met, as they had expected, with a small green glade.—It was surrounded, except at the slight opening by which they had entered it, with fine Spanish chestnut trees; which now loaded with their large brown fruit, rich and ripe, clustered in the starry foliage, boded a retreat as beautiful to the eye, as its shade was grateful to their senses. Vivian dismounted, and stretching out his legs, leaned back against the trunk of a tree; and Essper, having leaned Max and his own horse to some branches, proceeded to display his stores. Vivian was silent, thoughtful, and scarcely tasted any thing; Essper, on the contrary, was in unusual and even tablesome spirits: and had not his appetite necessarily produced a few pauses in his almost perpetual rattle, the patience of his master would have been fairly worn out. At length Essper had poured the whole supply; and as Vivian not only did not encourage his remarks, but even in a contemptuous manner had desired his silence, he was anxious to amuse himself by trying to catch in his mouth a large brilliant fly, which every instant was coming before him. Two individuals more singularly contrasting in their appearance than the master and the servant, could scarcely be conceived; Vivian, lying with his back against a tree, with his legs stretched out, his arms folded, and his eyes closed on the ground: and Essper, though seated, in perpetual motion, and shifting his posture with restless energy—now looking over his shoulder for the fly, then making an unsuccessful bite at it, and then wearied with his frequent failures, amusing himself with acting punch with his thumbs. Altogether presented two figures, which might have been considered as not inapt personifications of the rival systems of idealism and materialism.

At length Essper became silent for the sake of variety; and imagining from his master's example; that there must be some sweets in meditation hitherto undiscovered by him; he imitated Vivian's posture! So perverse is human nature, that the moment Vivian was aware that Essper was perfectly silent, he began to feel an inclination to converse with him.

"Why, Essper!" said he, looking up and smiling, "this is the first time during our acquaintance, that I have ever seen thought upon your brow. What can now be puzzling your wild brain?"

"I was thinking, sir," said Essper, with a very solemn look, "that if there were a deceased field-mouse here, I would moralize on death."

"What! turned philosopher?"

"Ay! sir—it appears to me," said he, taking up a husk which lay on the turf, "that there is not a nutshell in Christendom, which may not become matter for very grave meditation!"

"Can you expound that?"

"Verily, sir, the whole philosophy of life, seems to me to consist in discovering the kernel. When you see a courtier out of favour, or a merchant out of credit—when you see a soldier without pillage, a sailor without prize-money, and a lawyer without papers—a bachelor with nephews, and an old maid with nieces—be assured the nut is not worth the cracking, and send it to the winds, as I do this husk at present."

"Why, Essper!" said Vivian, laughing, "considering that you have taken your degree so lately, you wear the doctor's cap with authority! Instead of being in your novitiate, one would think that you had been a philosopher long enough to have outlived your system."

"Bless your highness! for philosophy, I sucked it in with my mother's milk. Nature then gave me the hint, which I have ever since acted on; and I hold, that the sum of all learning, consists in milking another man's cow." So much for the recent acquisition of my philosophy! I gained it, you see, your highness, with the first wink of my eye; and though I lost a great portion of it by seasickness in the Mediterranean, nevertheless, since I served your highness, I have assumed my old habits; and do opine that this vain globe is but a large foot ball, to be kicked and cuffed about by moody philosophers!"

"You must have seen a great deal in your life, Master Essper," said Vivian, who was amused by his servant's quaint humour.

"Like all great travellers," said Essper, "I have seen more than I remember, and remember more than I have seen."

"Have you any objection to go to the East again?" asked Vivian. "It would require but little persuasion to lead me there."

"I would rather go to a place where the religion is easier: I wish your highness would take me to England!"

"Nay, not there with me—if with others."

"With you—or with none."

"I cannot conceive, Essper, what can induce you to tie up your fortunes with those of such a sad-looking personage as myself."

"In truth, your highness, there is no accounting for tastes. My grandmother loved a brimmed cat."

"Your grandmother, Essper! Nothing would amuse me more than to be introduced to your family."

"My family, sir, are nothing more, nor less, than what all of us must be counted—worms of five feet long—mortal angels—the world's epitome—heaps of atoms, which nature has kneaded with blood into solid flesh—little worlds of living clay—sparks of heaven—inches of earth—Nature's quintessence—moving dust—the little all—smooth-faced cherubim, in whose souls the king of stars has drawn the image of himself!"

"And how many years has breathed the worm of five feet long, that I am now speaking to?"

"Good, your highness, I was no head at calculating from a boy; but I do remember that I am two days older than one of the planets."

"How is that?"

"There was one born in the sky, sir, the day I was christened with a Turkish crescent."

"Come, Essper," said Vivian, who was rather interested by the conversation; Essper having, until this morning, skilfully avoided any discourse upon the subject of his birth or family, adroitly turning the conversation whenever it chanced to approach those subjects, and silencing inquiries, if commenced, by some ludicrous and evidently fictitious answer. "Come, Essper," said Vivian, "I feel by no means in the humour to quit this shady retreat. You and I have known each other long, and gone through much together. It is but fair that I should become better acquainted with one who, to me, is not only a faithful servant, but what is more valuable, a faithful friend—I might now almost add, my only one. What say you to whiling away a passing hour, by giving me some sketch of your curious and adventurous life. If there be any thing that you wish to conceal, pass it over; but no invention; nothing but the truth, if you please—the whole truth, if you like."

"Why, your highness, as for this odd knot of soul and body, which none but the hand of Heaven could have twined, it was first seen, I believe, near the very spot where we are now sitting; for my mother, when I saw her first, and last, lived in Bohemia. She was an Egyptian, and came herself from the Levant. I lived a week, sir, in the seraglio, when I was at Constantinople, and I saw there the brightest women of all countries; Georgians, and Circassians, and Poles; in truth, sir, nature's master-pieces; and yet, by the Gods of all nations! there was not one of them half as lovely as the lady who gave me this tongue!" Here Essper exhibited at full length, the enormous feature, which had so much enraged the one-eyed sergeant at Frankfort.

"When I first remember myself," he continued, "I was playing with some other gipsy-boys, in the midst of a forest. Here was our settlement! It was large and powerful. My mother, probably from her beauty, possessed great influence, particularly among the men; and yet, I found not among them all a father. On the contrary, every one of my companions had a man whom he revered as his parent, and who taught him to steal; but I was called by the whole tribe, 'the mother-son,' and was honest, from my first year, out of mere wilfulness; at least, if I stole any thing, it was always from our own people. Many were the quarrels I occasioned; since, presuming on my mother's love and power, I never called mischief a scrape; but acting just as my fancy took me, I left those who suffered by my conduct to apologize for my ill-behaviour. Being thus an idle, unprofitable,

impudent, and injurious member of this community, they determined one day to cast me from their bosom; and in spite of my exertions and entreaties, the ungrateful vipers succeeded in their purpose. As a compliment parent, they allowed me to tender my resignation instead of receiving my expulsion. My mother gave me a donkey, a wallet, and a great deal of advice about my future conduct, and, what was more interesting to me, much information about my birth.

"Sweet child of my womb!" said my mother, pressing me to her bosom, 'be proud of white hands and straight nose! Thou art them not from me, and thou shalt take thence whence they came. Thy father is a Hun prince; and though I would not have parted thee, had I thought that thou wouldst ever prospered in our life—even if he had made his child of the law, and lord of his castle—as thou canst not tarry with us, haste thou to Give him this ring and this lock of hair; tell none have seen them but the father, the mother, and the child! He will look on them, and remember the days that are past; and thou shalt unto him as a hope for his lusty years, and a for his old age!"

"My mother gave me all necessary directions which I well remembered; and much more vice, which I directly forgot.

"Although tempted, now that I was a free to follow my own fancy, I still was too curious to see what kind of a person was my unknown father, to deviate either from my route or my paternal instructions; and in a fortnight's time reached my future principality.

"The sun sunk behind the proud castle of princely father, as, trotting slowly along upon a humble beast, with my wallet slung at my side, I approached it through his park. A guard, consisting of twenty or thirty men in magnificent uniforms, were lounging at the portal. I—your highness, what is the meaning of this news! I always made a vow to myself, I never would tell my history—Ah! murder! murder! what ails me!"

A large eagle fell dead at their feet.

"Protect me, master!" screamed Essper, as Vivian by the shoulder: "what is coming cannot stand—the earth seems to tremble! the wind that roars and rages! or is it ten thousand cannon blowing this globe to atoms!"

"It is—it must be the wind!" said Vivian, agitated. "We are not safe under these clouds, look to the horses!"

"I will, I will," said Essper, "if I can get Out—out of the forest! Ah! look at Max!"

Vivian turned, and beheld his spirited steed raised on his hind legs, and dashing his forefeet against the trunk of the tree to which they were tied. The terrified and furious creature struggling to disengage himself, and would have sustained or inflicted some terrible injury had not the wind suddenly hushed. Covered with foam, he stood panting, while Vivian patting encouraged him. Essper's less spirited steed from the first, crouched upon the earth, with sweat, his limbs quivering, and his head hanging out.

"Master!" said Essper, "what shall we do? Is there any chance of getting back to the castle?"

very lives are in danger. See that
 out! It looks like eternal night!
 we go? What shall we do?"

he castle—the castle!" said Vivian,

ist got into the road, when another
 f wind nearly took them off their
 nded them with the clouds of sand
 e out of the crevices of the moun-

round on every side, and hope gave
 e scene of desolation. Immense
 shivered from the largest trees; small
 irely stripped of their leaves; the
 s bowed to the earth; the waters
 in eddies out of the little rivulets;
 their nest to seek shelter in the crot-
 chs, unable to stem the driving air,
 ings, and fell upon the earth; the
 nals of the plain—almost suffocated
 sity of the wind—sought safety, and
 on; some of the largest trees were
 roots; the sluices of the mountains
 l innumerable torrents rushed down
 ty gulleys. The heavens now open,
 and thunder contend with the hor-
 rd!

nt all was again hushed. Dead
 led the bellow of the thunder—the
 ind—the rush of the waters—the
 e beasts—the screaming of the birds!
 eard save the splash of the agitated
 t up against the black rocks which

gain said Esser, "is this the day

ty side, Esser; keep close; make
 is pause; let us but reach the vil-

Vivian spoken, when greater dark-
 the trembling earth. Again the
 rent with lightning, which nothing
 enched but the descending deluge.
 ed down from the lowering firma-
 instant the horses dashed around—
 blinded and stifled by the gushing
 ing for breath. Shelter was no-
 quivering beasts reared, and snorted,
 their knees. The horsemen were
 With wonderful presence of mind,
 led in hoodwinking Max, who was
 The other horse appeared nearly ex-
 per, beside himself with terror, could
 its neck.

ul calm.

ourage, Esser!" said Vivian. "We
 ook up, my man! the storm cannot
 —and, see! I am sure the clouds are

nass of vapour which had seemed
 earth with instant destruction, sud-
 The red and lurid sun was visible,
 and heat were quenched in the still
 ers.

ount, Esser!" said Vivian; "this
 nce: five minutes good speed will
 illage."

Encouraged by his master's example, Esser
 once more got upon his horse; and the panting
 animals, relieved by the cessation of the hurricane,
 carried them at a fair pace towards the village,
 considering that their road was now impeded by
 the overflowing of the lake.

"Master! master!" said Esser, "cannot we
 get out of these waters?"

He had scarcely spoken, before a terrific burst—
 a noise, they knew not what—a rush, they could
 not understand—a vibration, which shook them on
 their horses—made them start back and again dis-
 mount. Every terror sunk before the appalling
 roar of the cataract. It seemed that the mighty
 mountain, unable to support its weight of waters,
 shook to the foundation. A lake had burst on its
 summit, and the cataract became a falling ocean.
 The source of the great deep appeared to be dis-
 charging itself over the range of mountains; the
 great gray peak tottered on its foundations! It
 shook! It fell! and buried in its ruins, the castle,
 the village, and the bridge!

Vivian, with starting eyes, beheld the whole
 washed away: instinct gave him energy to throw
 himself on the back of his horse—a breath—and
 he had leaped up the nearest hill! Esser George,
 in a state of distraction, was madly laughing as he
 climbed to the top of a high tree. His horse was
 carried off in the drowning waters, which had now
 reached the road.

"The desolation is complete!" thought Vivian.
 At this moment the wind again rose—the rain
 again descended—the heavens again opened—the
 lightning again flashed! An amethystine flame
 hung upon rocks and waters, and through the
 raging elements a yellow fork darted its fatal point
 at Esser's resting place. The tree fell! Vivian's
 horse, with a maddened snort, dashed down the
 hill: his master, senseless, clung to his neck; the
 frantic animal was past all government—he stood
 upright in the air—flung his rider—and fell dead!

Here leave we Vivian! It was my wish to
 have detailed, in the present portion of this work,
 the singular adventures which befell him in one
 of the most delightful of modern cities—light-
 hearted Vienna! But his history has expanded
 under my pen, and I fear that I have, even now,
 too much presumed upon an attention which, prob-
 ably, I am not entitled to command. I am, as
 yet, but standing without the gate of the Garden
 of Romance. True it is, that as I gaze through
 the ivory bars of its golden portal, I would fain
 believe that, following my roving fancy, I might
 arrive at some green retreats hitherto unexplored,
 and loiter among some leafy bowers where none
 have lingered before me. But these expectations
 may be as vain as those dreams of our youth, over
 which we have all mourned. The disappointment
 of manhood succeeds to the delusion of youth:
 let us hope that the heritage of old age is not
 despair!

Sweet reader! I trust that neither you nor my-
 self have any cause to repent our brief connexion.
 I see we part good friends—and so I press you
 gently by the hand!



THE RISE OF ISKANDER.

I.

The sun had set behind the mountains, and the plain of Athens was suffused with the violet of a Grecian eve. A light breeze rose; the groves awoke from their noonday trance, and died with returning animation, and the pennons of a Turkish squadron, that lay at anchor in the harbour of Piræus, twinkled in the lively air. From all parts of the city the women came forth in procession to the fountain; from another, a band of valiant horsemen sallied out, and threw their javelins in the invigorating sky, as they sped over the plain. The voice of birds, the hum of beautiful insects, the breath of beautiful flowers, the quivering note of the nightingale, the long call of the grasshopper, and the perfume of the violet, shrinking from the embrace of the hot breeze, filled the purple air with music and

solitary being stood upon the towering crag of Propylæa, amid the ruins of the temple of Minerva, and gazed upon the inspiring scene. Around him rose the matchless memorials of antiquity; immortal columns whose symmetry baffled modern proportion, serene caryatides, bearing greater grace a graceful burden, carvings of exquisite precision, and friezes breathing with heroic life. Apparently the stranger, though habited as a Persian, was not insensible to the genius of the Grecian, nor indeed would his form and countenance have misbecome a contemporary of Pericles and Alcibiades. In the prime of life, and far above common stature, but with a frame, the muscular vigour of which was even exceeded by its almost perfect symmetry, his high white forehead, his straight nose, his oval countenance, and his curling lip, presented the same visage that had inspired the poets of the surrounding demi-gods.

The dress of the stranger, although gorgeous, however, certainly not classic. A crimson robe was wound round his head, and glittered with brilliant aigrette of diamonds. His vest, which fitted to his form, was of green velvet, richly embroidered with gold and pearls. Over this he wore a light jacket of crimson velvet, equally embroidered, and lined with sable. He wore also the hite kamish common among the Albanians; while his feet were protected by sandals, the part of his legs was guarded by greaves of polished green velvet. From a broad belt of black leather peeped forth the jewelled hilts of a pair of daggers, and by his side was an enormous scabbard of chased silver.

The stranger gazed upon the wide prospect before him with an air of pensive abstraction. "Beautiful Greece," he exclaimed, "thou art still my

country. A mournful lot is mine, a strange and mournful lot, yet not uncheered by hope. I am at least a warrior; and this arm, though trained to war against thee, will not well forget, in the quick hour of battle, the blood that flows within it. Themistocles saved Greece and died a satrap; I am a bred one—let me reverse our lots, and die at least a patriot."

At this moment the evening hymn to the Virgin arose from a neighbouring convent. The stranger started as the sacred melody floated towards him, and taking a small golden cross from his heart, he kissed it with devotion, and then descending the steep of the citadel, entered the city.

He proceeded along the narrow winding streets of Athens until he at length arrived in front of a marble palace, in the construction of which the architect had certainly not consulted the surrounding models which time had spared to him, but which, however it might have offended a classic taste, presented altogether a magnificent appearance. Half a dozen guards, whose shields and helmets somewhat oddly contrasted with two pieces of cannon, one of which was ostentatiously placed on each side of the portal, and which had been presented to the Prince of Athens by the republic of Venice, lounging before the entrance, and paid their military homage to the stranger as he passed them. He passed them and entered a large quadrangular garden, surrounded by arcades, supported by a considerable number of thin, low pillars, of barbarous workmanship and various-coloured marbles. In the midst of the garden rose a fountain, whence the bubbling waters flowed in artificial channels through vistas of orange and lemon trees. By the side of the fountain, on a luxurious couch, his eyes fixed upon a richly-illuminated volume, reposed Nicæus, the youthful Prince of Athens.

"Ah! is it you?" said the prince, looking up with a smile, as the stranger advanced. "You have arrived just in time to remind me that we must do something more than read the Persæ—we must act it."

"My dear Nicæus," replied the stranger, "I have arrived only to bid you farewell."

"Farewell!" exclaimed the prince in a tone of surprise and sorrow, and he rose from the couch. "Why! what is this?"

"It is too true," said the stranger, and he led the way down one of the walks. "Events have occurred which entirely baffle all our plans and prospects, and placed me in a position as difficult as it is harrowing. Hunniades has suddenly crossed the Danube in great force, and carried every thing before him. I am ordered to proceed to Albania instantly, and to repair to the camp at the head of the Epirota."

"Indeed!" said Nicæus, with a thoughtful air. "My letters did not prepare me for this. 'Tis sudden! Is Amurath himself in the field?"

"No; Karem Bey commands. I have accounted for my delay to the sultan by pretended difficulties in our treaty, and have held out the prospect of a large tribute."

"When we are plotting that that tribute should be paid no longer!" added Nicæus with a smile.

"Alas! my dear friend," replied the Turkish commander, "my situation has now become critical. Hitherto my services for the Moslemin have been confined to acting against nations of their own faith. I am now suddenly summoned to combat against my secret creed, and the best allies of what I must yet call my secret country. The movement, it appears to me, must be made now or never, and I cannot conceal from myself, that it never could have been prosecuted under less auspicious circumstances."

"What, you desponding!" exclaimed Nicæus, "then I must despair. Your sanguine temper has alone supported me throughout all our dangerous hopes."

"And Æschylus?" said the stranger smiling.

"And Æschylus, certainly," replied Nicæus; "but I have lived to find even Æschylus insipid. I pant for action."

"It may be nearer than we can foresee," replied the stranger. "There is a God who fashions all things. He will not desert a righteous cause. He knoweth that my thoughts are as pure as my situation is difficult. I have some dim ideas still brooding in my mind, but we will not discuss them now. I must away, dear prince. The breeze serves fairly. Have you ever seen Hunniades?"

"I was educated at the court of Transylvania," replied Nicæus, looking down with a somewhat embarrassed air. "He is a famous knight, Christendom's chief bulwark."

The Turkish commander sighed. "When we meet again," he said, "may we meet with brighter hopes and more buoyant spirits. At present, I must, indeed, say farewell."

The prince turned with a dejected countenance, and pressed his companion to his heart. "'Tis a sad end," said he, "to all our happy hours and lofty plans."

"You are as yet too young to quarrel with fortune," replied the stranger, "and, for myself, I have not yet settled my accounts with her. However, for the present, farewell, dear Nicæus!"

"Farewell," replied the Prince of Athens, "Farewell, dear Iskander!"

II.

ISKANDER was the youngest son of the Prince of Epirus, who, with the other Grecian princes, had, at the commencement of the reign of Amurath the Second, in vain resisted the progress of the Turkish arms in Europe. The Prince of Epirus had obtained peace by yielding his four sons as hostages to the Turkish sovereign, who engaged that they should be educated in all the accomplishments of their rank, and with a due deference to their faith. On the death of the Prince of Epirus, however, Amurath could not resist the opportunity that then offered itself of adding to his empire the rich principality he had long coveted. A Turkish force instantly marched into Epirus, and seized upon Croia,

the capital city, and the children of its late ruler were doomed to death. The beauty, talents, and valour of the youngest son, saved him, however, from the fate of his poisoned brothers. Iskander was educated at Adrianople, in the Moslemin faith, and as he, at a very early age, excelled in feats of arms all the Moslemin warriors, he became a prime favourite of the sultan, and speedily rose in his service to the highest rank.

At this period the irresistible progress of the Turkish arms was the subject of alarm throughout all Christendom.

Constantinople, then the capital of the Greek empire, had already been more than once besieged by the predecessors of Amurath, and had only been preserved by fortunate accidents and humiliating terms. The despots of Bosnia, Servia, and Bulgaria, and the Grecian princes of Ætolia, Macedon, Epirus, Athens, Phocis, Boeotia, and indeed of all the regions to the straits of Corinth, were tributaries to Amurath, and the rest of Europe was only preserved from his grasp by the valour of the Hungarians and the Poles, whom a fortunate alliance had now united under the sovereignty of Vladislaus, who, incited by the pious eloquence of the Cardinal of St. Angelo, the legate of the pope, and yielding to the tears and supplications of the despot of Servia, had, at the time our story opens, quitted Buda, at the head of an immense army, crossed the Danube, and joining his valiant viceroy, the famous John Hunniades, vaivode of Transylvania, defeated the Turks with great slaughter, relieved all Bulgaria, and pushed on to the base of Mount Hæmus, known in modern times as the celebrated Balkan. Here the Turkish general, Karem Bey, awaited the Christians, and hither to his assistance was Iskander commanded to repair at the head of a body of janissaries, who had accompanied him to Greece, and the tributary Epirota.

Had Iskander been influenced by vulgar ambition, his loftiest desires might have been fully gratified by the career which Amurath projected for him. The Turkish sultan destined for the Grecian prince the hand of one of his daughters, and the principal command of his armies. He lavished upon him the highest dignities and boundless wealth; and, whether it arose from a feeling of remorse, or of affection for a warrior, whose unexampled valour and unrivalled skill had already added some of the finest provinces of Asia to his rule, it is certain that Iskander might have exercised over Amurath a far greater degree of influence than was enjoyed by any other of his courtiers. But the heart of Iskander responded with no sympathy to these flattering favours. His Turkish education could never eradicate from his memory the consciousness that he was a Greek; and although he was brought up in the Moslemin faith, he had, at an early period of his career, secretly recurred to the creed of his Christian fathers. He beheld in Amurath the murderer of his dearest kinsmen, and the oppressor of his country; and although a certain calmness of temper, and coolness of judgment, which very early developed themselves in his character, prevented him from ever giving any indication of his secret feelings, Iskander had long meditated on the exalted duty of freeing his country.

Despatched to Greece, to arrange the tribute and the treaties of the Grecian princes, Iskander became acquainted with the young Nicæus, who

naintance soon matured into friendship, as inexperienced: but nature had not in- m for action. The young Prince of ould loll by the side of a fountain, and the wonders of old days. Surrounded nuchs, his priests, and his courtiers, he onidas, and would have emulated The-

He was passionately devoted to the erature of his country, and had the good at that time, to prefer Demosthenes and Thrysostom and Gregory, and the chorusses cian theatre to the hymns of the Greek The sustained energy and noble simpli- character of Iskander, seemed to recall ng prince the classic heroes, over whom often musing, while the enthusiasm and Nicæus, and all that apparent weakness d those quick vicissitudes of emotion, to n of a fine susceptibility are subject, gaged the sympathy of the more vigor- constant, and experienced mind of his l.

æus, Iskander had, for the first time in nfided much of his secret heart; and the nce fired at the inspiring tale. Often iled over the fortunes of their country, d by their mutual invention, at length l to hope that they might effect its deli- when Iskander was summoned to the was a mournful parting. Both of them e last few months of their lives had owed ms to their companionship. The part- nds, united by sympathetic tastes, is al- ful; and friends, unless their sympathy d much better never meet. Iskander o the ship, sorrowful, but serene; Nicæus o his palace moody and fretful; lost his h his courtiers, and, when he was alone, tears.

III.

weeks had elapsed since the parting of nd Nicæus, when the former, at the head usand men, entered, by a circuitous route, of Mount Hæmus, and approached the amp, which had been pitched upon a levated table-ground, commanded on all superior heights, which, however, were nd well garrisoned by janissaries. The lited, and immediately prepared to raise t, while their commander, attended by officers, instantly proceeded to the pav- ram Bey.

ival of Iskander diffused great joy among y; and as he passed through the en-, the exclamations of the Turkish war- nced how ready they were to be led to by a chieftain who had been ever suc- l guard of honour, by the orders of Ka- advanced, to conduct Iskander to his and soon, entering the pavilion, the Gre- exchanged courtesies with the Turkish After the formal compliments had passed, y waved his hand, and the pavilion was ith the exception of Mousa, the chief and favourite of Karam. "You have good time, Iskander, to assist in the de- of the Christian dogs," said the bey. *with their accured success, they have oo far. Twice they have endeavoured the mountains; and each time they*

have been forced to retire with great loss. The passages are well barricadoed with timber and huge fragments of rock. The dogs have lost all heart, and are sinking under the joint sufferings of hun- ger and cold. Our scouts tell me they exhibit symptoms of retreat. We must rush down from the mountains, and annihilate them."

"Is Hunniades here in person?" inquired Is- kander.

"He is here," replied Karam, "in person—the dog of dogs! Come, Iskander, his head would be a fine Ramadan present to Amurath. 'Tis a head worth three tails, I guess!"

Mousa, the chief secretary, indulged in some suppressed laughter at this joke. Iskander smiled.

"If they retreat we must assuredly attack them," observed Iskander, musingly. "I have a persua- sion that Hunniades and myself will soon meet."

"If there be truth in the prophet!" exclaimed Karam, "I have no doubt of it. Hunniades is re- served for you, bey. We shall hold up our heads at court yet, Iskander. You have had letters lately?"

"Some slight words."

"No mention of us, of course?"

"Nothing, except some passing praise of your valour and discretion."

"We do our best, we do our best! Will Isa Bey have Ætolia, think you?"

"I have no thoughts. Our royal father will not forget his children, and Isa Bey is a most valiant chieftain."

"You heard not that he was coming here?" in- quired Karam.

"Have you?" responded the cautious Iskander.

"A rumour, a rumour," replied Karam. "He is at Adrianople, think you?"

"It may be so: I am, you know, from Athens."

"True, true. We shall beat them, Iskander, we shall beat them."

"For myself, I feel sanguine," replied the prince, and he arose to retire. "I must at present to my men. We must ascertain more accurately the movements of the Christians before we decide on our own. I am inclined myself to reconnoitre them. How far may it be?"

"There is not room to form our array between them and the mountains," replied Karam.

"'Tis well. Success attend the true believers! By to-morrow's dawn we shall know more."

IV.

ISKANDER returned to his men. Night was coming on. Fires and lights blazed and sparkled in every direction. The air was clear but very cold. He entered his tent, and muffling himself up in his pelisse of sables, he mounted his horse, and declining any attendance, rode for some little distance, until he had escaped from the precincts of the camp. Then he turned his horse towards one of the wildest passes of the mountain, and galloping at great speed, never stopped until he had gained a considerable ascent. The track became steep and rugged. The masses of loose stone rendered his progress slow; but his Anatolian charger still bore him at intervals bravely, and in three hours' time he had gained the summit of Mount Hæmus. A brilliant moon flooded the broad plains of Bulgaria with shadowy light. At the base of the mountainous range, the red watch-fires denoted the situation of the Christian camp.

Iskander proceeded down the descent with an audacious rapidity; but his charger was thoroughbred, and his moments were golden. Ere midnight, he had reached the outposts of the enemy, and was challenged by a sentinel.

"Who goes there?"

"A friend to Christendom."

"The word?"

"I have it not—nay, calmly. I am alone, but I am not unarmed. I do not know the word. I come from a far country, and bear important tidings to the great Hunniades; conduct me to that chief."

"May I be crucified if I will," responded the sentinel, "before I know who and what you are. Come, keep off, unless you wish to try the effect of a Polish lance," continued the sentinel; "tis something, I assure you, not less awkward than your Greek fire, if Greek indeed you be."

"My friend, you are a fool," said Iskander, "but time is too precious to argue any longer." So saying, the Turkish commander dismounted, and taking up the brawny sentinel in his arms with the greatest ease, threw him over his shoulder, and, threatening the astounded soldier with instant death if he struggled, covered him with his pelisse, and entered the camp.

They approached a watch-fire, around which several soldiers were warming themselves.

"Who goes there?" inquired a second sentinel.

"A friend to Christendom," answered Iskander.

"The word?"

Iskander hesitated.

"The word, or I'll let fly," said the sentinel, elevating his cross-bow.

"The Bridge of Buda," instantly replied the terrified prisoner beneath the pelisse of Iskander.

"Why did not you answer before, then?" said one of the guards.

"And why do you mock us by changing your voice?" said another. "Come, get on with you, and no more jokes."

Iskander proceeded through a street of tents, in some of which were lights, but all of which were silent. At length he met the esquire of a Polish knight returning from a convivial meeting, not a little elevated.

"Who are you?" inquired Iskander.

"I am an esquire," replied the gentleman.

"A shrewd man, I doubt not, who would make his fortune," replied Iskander. "You must know great things have happened. Being on guard, I have taken a prisoner, who has deep secrets to divulge to the Lord Hunniades. Thither, to his pavilion, I am now bearing him. But he is a stout barbarian, and almost too much for me. Assist me in carrying him to the pavilion of Hunniades, and you shall have all the reward and half the fame."

"You are a very civil spoken young gentleman," said the esquire. "I think I know your voice. Your name, if I mistake not, is Leckinski?"

"A relative. We had a common ancestor."

"I thought so. I know the Leckinskies ever by their voice. I am free to help you on the terms you mention—all the reward and half the fame. 'Tis a strong barbarian, is it. We cannot cut its throat, or it will not divulge. All the reward and half the fame! I will be a knight to-morrow. It seems a sort of fish, and has a smell."

The esquire seized the shoulders of the prisoner, who would have spoken had he not been terrified by the threats of Iskander, who carrying the legs

of the sentinel, allowed the Polish gentleman to lead the way to the pavilion of Hunniades. Thither they soon arrived; and Iskander, dropping his burden, and leaving the prisoner without to the charge of his assistant, entered the pavilion of the general of the Hungarians.

He was stopped in a small outer apartment by an officer, who inquired his purpose, and to whom he repeated his desire to see the Hungarian leader, without loss of time, on important business. The officer hesitated; but, summoning several guards, left Iskander in their custody, and stepping behind a curtain, disappeared. Iskander heard voices, but could distinguish no words. Soon the officer returned, and, ordering the guards to disarm and search Iskander, directed the Grecian prince to follow him. Drawing aside the curtain, Iskander and his attendant entered a low apartment of considerable size. It was hung with skins. A variety of armour and dresses were piled on couches. A middle-aged man, of majestic appearance, muffled up in a pelisse of furs, with long chestnut hair, and a cap of crimson velvet and ermine, was walking up and down the apartment, and dictating some instructions to a person who was kneeling on the ground, and writing by the bright flame of a brazen lamp. The bright flame of the brazen lamp fell full upon the face of the secretary. Iskander beheld a most beautiful woman.

She looked up as Iskander entered. Her large dark eyes glanced through his soul. Her raven hair descended to her shoulders in many curls on each side of her face, and was braided with strings of immense pearls. A broad cap of white fox-skin crowned her whiter forehead. Her features were very small, but sharply moulded, and a delicate tint gave animation to her clear fair cheek. She looked up as Iskander entered, with an air rather of curiosity than embarrassment.

Hunniades stopped, and examined his visitor with a searching inquisition. "Whence come you?" inquired the Hungarian chieftain.

"From the Turkish camp," was the answer.

"An envoy or a deserter?"

"Neither."

"What then?"

"A convert."

"Your name?"

"Lord Hunniades," said Iskander, "that is for your private ear. I am unarmed, and were I otherwise, the first knight of Christendom can scarcely fear. I am one in birth and rank your equal; if not in fame, at least, I trust, in honour. My time is all-priceless: I can scarcely stay here while my horse breathes. Dismiss your attendant."

Hunniades darted a glance at his visitor which would have baffled a weaker brain, but Iskander stood the scrutiny calm and undisturbed. "Go Stanislaus," said the vaivode to the officer. "This lady, sir," continued the chieftain, "is my daughter, and one from whom I have no secrets."

Iskander bowed lowly as the officer disappeared.

"And now," said Hunniades, "to business. Your purpose?"

"I am a Grecian prince, and a compulsory ally of the Moslemin. In a word, my purpose here is to arrange a plan by which we may effect at the same time your triumph and my freedom."

"To whom, then, have I the honour of speaking?" inquired Hunniades.

"My name, great Hunniades, is perhaps at

together unknown to you: they call me Iskander."

"What, the right arm of Amurath, the conqueror of Caramania, the flower of Turkish chivalry! Do indeed behold that matchless warrior!" exclaimed Hunniades, and he held forth his hand to his guest, and ungirding his own sword, offered it to the prince. "Iduna," continued Hunniades, to his daughter, "you at length behold Iskander."

"My joy is great, sir," replied Iduna, "if I indeed might understand that we may count the Prince Iskander a champion of the cross."

Iskander took from his heart his golden crucifix, and kissed it before her. "This has been my communion and consolation for long years, lady," said Iskander; "you, perhaps, know my mournful history, Hunniades. Hitherto, my pretended sovereignty is not required me to bare my cimenter against my Christian brethren. That hour, however, has length arrived, and it has decided me to adopt a line of conduct long meditated. Karam Bey, who is aware of your necessities, the moment you commence your retreat, will attack you. I shall command his left wing. In spite of his superior power and position, draw up in array, and meet him with confidence. I propose, at a convenient moment in the day, to withdraw my troops, and, with the pirots, hasten to my native country, and at once raise the standard of independence. It is a bold measure, but success is the child of audacity. We must assist each other with mutual diversions. Single-handed it is in vain for me to commence a struggle, which, with all adventitious advantages, will require the utmost exertion of energy, skill, and patience. But if yourself and the King Ulaslaus occupy the armies of Amurath in Bulgaria, I am not without hope of ultimate success, since I live to inspire me all the most urgent interests of manly, and combat, at the same time, for my dear country, and my lawful crown."

"Brave prince, I pledge you my troth," said Hunniades, coming forward, and seizing his hand; "and while Iskander and Hunniades live, they will never cease until they have achieved their great and holy end."

"It is a solemn compact," said Iskander, "more sacred than if registered by the scribes of Christendom. Lady Iduna, your prayers!"

"They are ever with the champions of the cross," replied the daughter of Hunniades. She rose, the grey cloak in which she was enveloped, fell from its exquisite form. "Noble Iskander, this rosary from the holy sepulchre," continued Iduna; "wear it for the sake and memory of that blessed martyr, who died for our sins."

Iskander held forth his arm and touched her delicate hand as he received the rosary, which, passing to his lips, he placed round his neck.

"Great Hunniades," said the Grecian prince, "I at cross the mountains before dawn. Let me venture to entreat that we should hear to-morrow of the Christian camp is in retreat."

"Let it be even so," said the Hungarian, after he thought, "and may to-morrow's sun bring brighter days to Christendom." And with these words terminated the brief and extraordinary visit Iskander to the Christian general.

V.

The intelligence of the breaking up of the Christian camp, and the retreat of the Christian army,

soon reached the divan of Karam Bey, who immediately summoned Iskander to consult on the necessary operations. The chieftains agreed that instant pursuit was indispensable, and soon the savage Hæmus poured forth from its green bosom, swarms of that light cavalry which was perhaps even a more fatal arm of the Turkish power than the famous janissaries themselves. They hovered on the rear of the retreating Christians, charged the wavering, captured the unwary. It was impossible to resist their sudden and impetuous movements, which rendered their escape as secure as their onset was overwhelming. Wearied at length by the repeated assaults, Hunniades, who, attended by some chosen knights, had himself repaired to the rear, gave orders for the army to halt and offer battle.

Their pursuers instantly withdrew to a distance, and gradually forming into two divisions, awaited the arrival of the advancing army of the Turks. The Moslem came forward in fierce array, and with the sanguine courage inspired by expected triumph. Very conspicuous was Iskander bounding in his crimson vest upon his ebon steed, and waving his gleaming cimenter.

The janissaries charged calling upon Allah! with an awful shout. The Christian knights, invoking the Christian saints, received the Turks at the point of their lances. But many a noble lance was shivered that morn, and many a bold rider and worthy steed bit the dust of that field, borne down by the irresistible numbers of their fierce adversaries. Everywhere the balls and the arrows whistled through the air, and sometimes an isolated shriek, heard amid the general clang, announced another victim to the fell and mysterious agency of the Greek fire.

Hunniades, while he performed all the feats of an approved warrior, watched with anxiety the disposition of the Turkish troops. Hitherto, from the nature of their position, but a portion of both armies had interfered in the contest, and as yet, Iskander had kept aloof. But now, as the battle each instant raged with more fury, and it was evident that ere long the main force of both armies must be brought into collision, Hunniades, with a terrible suspense, watched whether the Grecian prince were willing, or even capable of executing his plan. Without this fulfilment, the Christian hero could not conceal from himself that the day must be decided against the cross.

In the mean time Iskander marked the course of events with not less eagerness than Hunniades. Already Karam Bey had more than once summoned him to bring the Epirots into action. He assented; but an hour passed away without changing his position. At length, more from astonishment than rage, the Turkish commander sent his chief secretary Mousa himself to impress his wishes upon his colleague, and obtain some explanation of his views and conduct. Mousa found Iskander surrounded by some of the principal Epirot nobles, all mounted on horseback, and standing calmly under a wide-spreading plane tree. The chief secretary of Karam Bey was too skilful a courtier to permit his countenance to express his feelings, and he delivered himself of his mission rather as if he had come to request advice, than to communicate a reprimand.

"Your master is a wise man, Mousa," replied Iskander; "but even Karam Bey may be mistaken."

He deems that a battle is not to be won by loitering under a shadowy tree. Now I differ with him, and I even mean to win this day by such a piece of truancy. However, it may certainly now be time for more active work. You smile encouragement, good Mousa. Giorgio, Demetrius, to your duty!"

At these words, two stout Epirots advanced to the unfortunate secretary, seized and bound him, and placed him on horseback before one of their comrades.

"Now all who love their country follow me!" exclaimed Iskander. So saying, and at the head of five thousand horsemen, Iskander quitted the field at a rapid pace.

VI.

WITH incredible celerity Iskander and his cavalry dashed over the plains of Roumelia, and never halted except for short and hurried intervals of rest and repose, until they had entered the mountainous borders of Epirus, and were within fifty miles of its capital, Croia. On the eve of entering the kingdom of his fathers, Iskander ordered his guards to produce the chief secretary of Karam Bey. Exhausted with fatigue, vexation, and terror, the disconsolate Mousa was led forward.

"Cheer up, worthy Mousa!" said Iskander, lying his length on the green turf. "We have had a sharp ride; but I doubt not we shall soon find ourselves, by the blessing of God, in good quarters. There is a city at hand which they call Croia, in which once, as the rumour runs, the son of my father should not have had to goseek for an entrance. No matter. Methinks, worthy Mousa, thou art the only man in our society that can sign thy name. Come, now, write me an order signed Karam Bey to the governor of this said city, for its delivery up to the valiant champion of the crescent, Iskander, and thou shalt ride in future at a pace more suitable to a secretary."

The worthy Mousa humbled himself to the ground, and then taking his writing materials from his girdle, inscribed the desired order, and delivered it to Iskander, who, glancing at the inscription, pushed it into his vest.

"I shall proceed at once to Croia, with a few friends," said Iskander; "do you, my bold companions, follow me this eve in various parties, and by various routes. At dead of the second night, collect in silence before the gates of Croia!"

Thus speaking, Iskander called for his now refreshed charger, and, accompanied by two hundred horsemen, bade farewell for a brief period to his troops, and soon having crossed the mountains, descended into the fertile plains of Epirus.

When the sun rose in the morning, Iskander and his friends beheld at the further end of the plain a very fine city shining in the light. It was surrounded with lofty turreted walls flanked by square towers, and was built upon a gentle eminence, which gave it a very majestic appearance. Behind it rose a lofty range of purple mountains of very picturesque form, and the highest peaks capped with snow. A noble lake, from which troops of wild fowl occasionally rose, expanded like a sheet of silver on one side of the city. The green breast of the contiguous hills sparkled with white houses. "Behold Croia!" exclaimed Iskander. "Our old fathers could choose a site, comrades. We shall see whether they expend their time and treasure for

strangers, or their own seed." So saying, he spurred his horse, and with panting hearts and smiling faces, Iskander and his company had soon arrived in the vicinity of the city.

The city was surrounded by a beautiful region of corn-fields and fruit trees. The road was arched with the overhanging boughs. The birds chirped on every spray. It was a blithe and merry morn. Iskander plucked a bunch of olives as he cantered along. "Dear friends," he said, looking round with an inspiring smile, "let us gather our first harvest!" And, thereupon, each putting forth his rapid hand, seized, as he rushed by, the emblem of possession, and following the example of his leader, placed it in his cap.

They arrived at the gates of the city, which was strongly garrisoned; and Iskander, followed by his train, galloped up the height of the citadel. Alighting from his horse, he was ushered into the divan of the governor, an ancient pasha, who received the conqueror of Caramania with all the respect that became so illustrious a companion of the crescent. After the usual forms of ceremonious hospitality, Iskander, with a courteous air, presented him the order for delivering up the citadel; and the old pasha, resigning himself to the loss of his post with oriental submission, instantly delivered the keys of the citadel and town to Iskander, and requested permission immediately to quit the late scene of his command.

Quitting the citadel, Iskander now proceeded through the whole town, and in the afternoon reviewed the Turkish garrison in the great square. As the late governor was very anxious to quit Croia that very day, Iskander insisted on a considerable portion of the garrison accompanying him as a guard of honour, and returning the next morning. The rest he divided in several quarters, and placed the gates in charge of his own companions.

At midnight the Epirots, faithful to their omen, arrived and united beneath the walls of the city, and after interchanging the signals agreed upon, the gates were opened. A large body instantly marched and secured the citadel. The rest, conducted by appointed leaders, surrounded the Turks in their quarters. And suddenly, in the noon of night, in that great city, arose a clang so dreadful that people leaped up from their sleep and stared with stupor. Instantly the terrace of every house blazed with torches, and it became as light as day. Troops of armed men were charging down the streets brandishing their cimeters and yataghans, and exclaiming, "The Cross, the Cross!"—"Liberty!"—"Greece!"—"Iskander and Epirus!" The townsmen recognised their countrymen by their language and their dress. The name of Iskander acted as a spell. They stopped not to inquire. A magic sympathy at once persuaded them that this great man had, by the grace of heaven, recurred to the creed and country of his fathers. And so every townsmen, seizing the nearest weapon, with a spirit of patriotic frenzy, rushed into the streets, crying out, "The Cross, the Cross! Liberty! Greece! Iskander and Epirus!" Ay! even the women lost all womanly fears, and stimulated instead of soothing the impulses of their manhood. They fetched their arms, they held the torches, they sent them forth with vows, and prayers, and imprecations, their children clinging to their robes, and repeating with enthusiasm, phrases which they could not comprehend.

urks fought with the desperation of men who they are betrayed, and must be victims. All and isolated bodies were soon massacred, cold steel, for at this time, although some terrible inventions of modern warfare were used, their use was not general. The citadel, was fortified with cannon; but the greater he soldiery trusted to their crooked swords, unerring javelins. The main force of the garrison had been quartered in an old palace archbishop, situated in the middle of the slightly rising and open ground, a massy of rustic stone. Here the Turks, although led, defended themselves desperately, using bows with terrible effect; and hither, of the city being now secured, Iskander prepared to achieve its complete deliverance. Greeks had endeavoured to carry the principle of the palace by main force, but the of the portal had resisted their utmost exertions and the arrows of the besieged had at length been able to retire to a distance. Iskander directed two pieces of cannon should be dragged into the citadel, and then played against them. In the mean time, he ordered immense camp-fagots to be lit before the building, the which prevented the besieged from taking

The ardour of the people was so great, cannon were soon served against them and their effects were speedily remarked. Every portal shook; a few blows of the battering ram and it fell. The Turks sallied forth, were met with a shower of Greek fire, and driven agonizing yells. Some endeavoured to seal the windows, and were speared or cut down as they appeared wringing their hands in despair on the terraced roof. Suddenly the palace seemed to be on fire. A tall white bluish smoke rolled up from a cloud of smoke, and soon, as if by magic, the whole back of the building was covered with rising tongues of red and raging fire. Amid a Babel of shrieks, and shouts, and cries, and prayers, and curses, the roof of the palace fell with a crash, which produced amid the ruins an awful and momentary silence, but in a few minutes they started from their strange inactivity, and leaping forward, leaped into the smoking ruins, and in the same time completed the massacre and their freedom.

VII.

At dawn Iskander sent couriers throughout Epirus, announcing the fall of Croia, and had raised the standard of independence in that country. He also despatched a trusty messenger to Prince Nicæus, at Athens, and to the Hunniades. The people were so excited over all Epirus, at this great and unthoughted event, that they simultaneously rose in all that country, and massacred the Turks, and were only restrained in a forced submission to Amurath, by the strong garrisons of the

Iskander was very anxious to effect the relief of these garrisons without loss of time, in case if Amurath sent a great power against them, the expected, the invading army might have to rely upon but its own force, and that action might not in any way be diverted from its overthrow. Therefore, as soon as

his troops had rested, and he had formed his new recruits into some order, which, with their willing spirits, did not demand many days, Iskander set out from Croia, at the head of twelve thousand men, and marched against the strong city of Petrella, meeting in his way the remainder of the garrison of Croia on their return, who surrendered themselves to him at discretion. Petrella was only one day's march from Croia, and when Iskander arrived there he requested a conference with the governor, and told his tale so well, representing the late overthrow of the Turks by Hunniades, and the incapacity of Amurath at present to relieve him, that the Turkish commander agreed to deliver up the place, and leave the country with his troops, particularly as the alternative of Iskander to these easy terms was ever conquest without quarter. And thus, by a happy mixture of audacity and adroitness, the march of Iskander throughout Epirus, was rather like a triumph than a campaign, the Turkish garrisons imitating, without any exception, the conduct of their comrades at Petrella, and dreading the fate of their comrades at the capital. In less than a month, Iskander returned to Epirus, having delivered the whole country from the Moslem yoke.

Hitherto Iskander had heard nothing either of Hunniades or Nicæus. He learned therefore with great interest as he passed through the gates of the city that the Prince of Athens had arrived at Croia on the preceding eve, and also that the messenger had returned from the Hungarian camp. Amid the acclamations of an enthusiastic people, Iskander once more ascended the citadel of Croia. Nicæus received him at the gate. Iskander sprang from his horse, and embraced his friend. Hand in hand, and followed by their respective trains, they entered the fortress palace.

"My dear friend," said Iskander, when they were once more alone, "you see we were right not to despair. Two months have scarcely elapsed since we parted without a prospect, or with the most gloomy one, and now we are in a fair way of achieving all that we can desire. Epirus is free!"

"I came to claim my share in its emancipation," said Nicæus with a smile, "but Iskander is another Caesar!"

"You will have many opportunities yet, believe me, Nicæus, of proving your courage and your patriotism," replied Iskander; "Amurath will never allow this affair to pass over in this quiet manner. I did not commence this struggle without a conviction that it would demand all the energy and patience of a long life. I shall be rewarded if I leave freedom as a heritage to my countrymen; but for the rest, I feel that I bid farewell to every joy of life, except the ennobling consciousness of performing a noble duty. In the mean time, I understand a messenger awaits me here from the great Hunniades. Unless that shield of Christendom maintain himself in his present position, our chance of ultimate security is feeble. With his constant diversion in Bulgaria, we may contrive here to struggle into success. You sometimes laugh at my sanguine temper, Nicæus. To say the truth, I am more serene than sanguine, and was never more conscious of the strength of my opponent than now, when it appears that I have beaten him. Hark! the people cheer. I love the people, Nicæus, who are ever influenced by genuine and generous feelings. They cheer as if they had

once more gained a country. Alas! they little know what they must endure even at the best. Nay! look not gloomy; we have done great things, and will do more. Who waits without there? Demetrius! Call the messenger from Lord Hunniades."

An Epirot bearing a silken packet was now introduced, which he delivered to Iskander. Reverently touching the hand of his chieftain, the messenger then kissed his own and withdrew. Iskander broke the seal, and drew forth a letter from the silken cover.

"So! this is well!" exclaimed the prince with great animation, as he threw his quick eye over the letter. "As I hoped and deemed, a most complete victory. Karam Bey himself a prisoner, baggage, standards, great guns, treasure. Brave soldier of the cross! (may I prove so!) Your perfectly devised movement, (poh, poh!) Hah! what is this?" exclaimed Iskander, turning pale; his lip quivered, his eye looked dim. He walked to an arched window. His companion, who supposed that he was reading, did not disturb him.

"Poor, poor Hunniades!" at length exclaimed Iskander, shaking his head.

"What of him?" inquired Nicæus quickly.

"The sharpest accident of war!" replied Iskander. "It quite clouds my spirit. We must forget these things, we must forget. Epirus! he is not a patriot who can spare a thought from thee. And yet, so young, so beautiful, so gifted, so worthy of a hero!—when I saw her by her great father's side, sharing the toils, aiding his councils, supplying his necessities, methought I gazed upon a ministering angel!—upon—"

"Stop, stop in mercy's name, Iskander!" exclaimed Nicæus in a very agitated tone. "What is all this? Surely no,—surely not—surely Iduna—!"

"Tis she!"

"Dead?" exclaimed Nicæus, rushing up to his companion, and seizing his arm.

"Worse, much worse!"

"Gods of heaven!" exclaimed the young prince, with almost a frantic air. "Tell me! all, tell me all! This suspense fires my brain. Iskander, you know not what this woman is to me—the sole object of my being, the bane, the blessing of my life! Speak, dear friend, speak! I beseech you! where is Iduna?"

"A prisoner to the Turk."

"Iduna a prisoner to the Turk! I'll not believe it! Why do we wear swords? Where's chivalry? Iduna a prisoner to the Turk! 'Tis false. It cannot be. Iskander, you are a coward! I am a coward! All are cowards! A prisoner to the Turk! Iduna! What, the rose of Christendom! has it been plucked by such a turbaned dog as Amurath? Farewell, Epirus! Farewell, classic Athens! Farewell, bright fields of Greece, and dreams that made them brighter! The sun of all my joy and hope is set, and set forever!"

So saying, Nicæus, tearing his hair and garments, flung himself upon the floor, and hid his face in his robes.

Iskander paced the room with a troubled step and thoughtful brow. After some minutes he leaned down by the Prince of Athens, and endeavoured to console him.

"It is in vain, Iskander, it is in vain," said Nicæus. "I wish to die."

"Were I a favoured lover, in such a situation,"

replied Iskander, "I should scarcely consider *des* my duty, unless the sacrifice of myself preserv my mistress."

"Hah!" exclaimed Nicæus, starting from the ground. "Do you conceive, then, the possibility of rescuing her?"

"If she live, she is a prisoner in the seraglio Adrianople. You are as good a judge as myself of the prospect that awaits your exertions. It without doubt, a difficult adventure, but such, I think, as a Christian knight should scarcely shrink from."

"To horse," exclaimed Nicæus, "to horse—yet what can I do? Were she in any other place but the capital I might rescue her by force, but the heart of their empire—it is impossible. There no ransom that can tempt the Turk! A principality would rise in the balance beside the jewel."

"That were scarcely wise, and certainly not just," replied Iskander; "but ransom will be of avail. Hunniades has already offered to restore Karam Bey, and all the prisoners of rank, and the chief trophies, and Amurath has refused to listen to any terms. The truth is, Iduna has found favour in the eyes of his son, the young Mahomed."

"Holy Virgin! hast thou no pity on this Christian maid?" exclaimed Nicæus. "The young Mahomed! Shall this licentious infidel—ah! Iskander, dear, dear Iskander, you who have so much wisdom, and so much courage; you who can advise all things, and dare all things; help me, help me; on my knees I do beseech you, take up the crying cause of foul oppression, and for the sake of all you love and reverence—your creed, your country, and perchance your friend, let your greatness, like some solemn angel, haste to the rescue of the sweet Iduna, and save her, save her!"

"Some thoughts like these were rising in my mind when first I spoke," replied Iskander. "This is a better cue, far more befitting princes than boyish tears, and all the outward misery of worn, tattered garment and dishevelled locks. Come, Nicæus, we have to struggle with a mighty fortune. Let us be firm as fate itself."

VIII.

IMMEDIATELY after his interview with Nicæus Iskander summoned some of the chief citizens of Croia to the citadel, and submitting to them his arrangements for the administration of Epirus, announced the necessity of his instant departure for a short interval; and the same evening, ere the moon had risen, himself and the Prince of Athens quitted the city, and proceeded in the direction of Adrianople. They travelled with great rapidity until they reached a small town upon the frontier where they halted for one day. Here, in the bazaar Iskander purchased for himself the dress of an Armenian physician. In his long dark robes, so large round cap of black wool, his face and hands stained, and his beard and mustachios shaven, seemed impossible that he could be recognised. Nicæus was habited as his page, in a dress of coarse red cloth, setting tight to his form, with a red cap with a long blue tassel. He carried a large bag containing drugs, some surgical instruments, and a few books. In this guise, as soon as the gates were open on the morrow, Iskander mounted on a very small mule, and Nicæus on a very large one. The two princes commenced the passage of

mountainous range, an arm of the Balkan, which divided Epirus from Roumelia.

"I broke the wind of the finest charger in all Asia when I last ascended these mountains," said Iskander; "I hope this day's journey may be accepted as a sort of atonement."

"Faith! there is little doubt I am the best mounted of the two," said Nicæus. "However, I hope we shall return at a sharper pace."

"How came it, my Nicæus," said Iskander, "that you never mentioned to me the name of Iduna when we were at Athens? I little supposed when I made my sudden visit to Hunniades, that I was about to appear to so fair a host. She is a rarely gifted lady."

"I knew of her being at the camp as little as yourself," replied the Prince of Athens, "and for the rest, the truth is, Iskander, there are some slight crosses in our loves, which time, I hope, will fashion rightly." So saying, Nicæus pricked on his donkey, and flung his stick at a bird which was perched on the branch of a tree. Iskander did not resume a topic to which his companion seemed disinclined. Their journey was tedious. Towards nightfall they reached the summit of the usual track; and as the descent was difficult, they were obliged to rest until daybreak.

On the morrow they had a magnificent view of the rich plains of Roumelia, and in the extreme distance, the great city of Adrianople, its cupolas and minarets blazing and sparkling in the sun. This glorious prospect at once revived all their energies. It seemed that the moment of peril and of fate had arrived. They pricked on their sorry steeds; and on the morning of the next day, presented themselves at the gates of the city. The thorough knowledge which Iskander possessed of the Turkish character, obtained them an entrance, which was at one time almost doubtful, from the irritability and impatience of Nicæus. They repaired to a caravansera of good repute in the neighbourhood of the seraglio; and having engaged their rooms, the Armenian physician, attended by his page, visited several of the neighbouring coffee-houses, announcing, at the same time, his arrival, his profession, and his skill.

As Iskander felt pulses, examined tongues, and distributed drugs and charms, he listened with interest and amusement to the conversation of which he himself was often the hero. He found that the Turks had not yet recovered from their consternation at his audacity and success. They were still wondering, and if possible more astounded than indignant. The politicians of the coffee-houses, chiefly consisting of janissaries, were loud in their murmur. The popularity of Amurath had vanished before the triumph of Hunniades, and the rise of Iskander.

"But Allah has in some instances favoured the faithful," remarked Iskander; "I heard in my travels of your having captured a great princess of the Giaours!"

"God is great!" said an elderly Turk with a long white beard. "The hakim congratulates the faithful because they have taken a woman!"

"Not so, merely," replied Iskander; "I heard the woman was a princess. If so, the people of Franguestan will pay any ransom for their great women; and by giving up this fair Giaour, you may free many of the faithful."

"Mashallah!" said another ancient Turk, sipping his coffee. "The hakim speaks wisely."

"May I murder my mother!" exclaimed a young janissary, with great indignation. "But this is the very thing that makes me wild against Amurath. Is not this princess a daughter of that accursed Giaour, that dog of dogs, Hunniades? and has he not offered for her ransom our brave Karam Bey himself, and his chosen warriors? and has not Amurath said nay? And why has he said nay? Because his son, the Prince Mahomed, instead of fighting against the Giaours, has looked upon one of their women, and has become a mejnoun. Pah! May I murder my mother,—but if the Giaours were in full march to the city, I'd not fight. And let him tell this to the cadi who dares; for there are ten thousand of us, and we have sworn by the kettle—but we will not fight for Giaours, or those who love Giaours!"

"If you mean me, Ali, about going to the cadi," said the chief eunuch of Mahomed, who was standing by, "let me tell you I am no tale-bearer, and scorn to do an unmanly act. The young prince can beat the Giaours without the aid of those who are noisy enough in a coffee-house, when they are quiet enough in the field. And, for the rest of the business, you may all ease your hearts; for the frangy princess you talk of, is pining away, and will soon die. The sultan has offered a hundred purses of gold to any one who cures her; but the gold will never be counted by the hasnadar, or I will double it."

"Try your fortune, hakim," said several laughing lingers to Iskander.

"Allah has stricken the frangy princess," said the old Turk with a white beard.

"He will strike all Giaours," said his ancient companion, sipping his coffee. "Tis so written."

"Well! I do not like to hear of women-slaves pining to death," said the young janissary, in a softened tone, "particularly when they are young. Amurath should have ransomed her, or he might have given her to one of his officers, or ~~any~~ young fellow that had particularly distinguished himself." And so, twirling his mustachios, and flinging down his piastre, the young janissary strutted out of the coffee-house.

"When we were young," said the old Turk with the white beard to his companion, shaking his head, "when we were young—"

"We conquered Anatolia, and never opened our mouths," rejoined his companion.

"I never offered an opinion till I was sixty," said the old Turk; "and then it was one which had been in our family for a century."

"No wonder Hunniades carries every thing before him," said his companion.

"And that accursed Iskander," said the old man.

The chief eunuch, finishing his vase of sherbet, moved away. The Armenian physician followed him.

IX.

THE chief eunuch turned into a burial-ground, through which a way led, by an avenue of cypress-trees, to the quarter of the seraglio. The Armenian physician, accompanied by his page, followed him. "Noble sir!" said the Armenian physician; "may I trespass for a moment on your lordship's attention?"

"Worthy hakim, is it you?" replied the chief eunuch, turning round with an encouraging smile of courteous condescension,—"your pleasure?"

"I would speak to you of important matters," said the physician.

The eunuch carelessly seated himself on a richly-carved tomb, and crossing his legs with an air of pleasant superiority, adjusted a fine emerald that sparkled on his finger, and bade the hakim address him without hesitation.

"I am a physician," said the Armenian.

The eunuch nodded.

"And I heard your lordship in the coffee-house mention that the sultan, our sublime master, had offered a rich reward to any one who could effect the cure of a favourite captive."

"No less a reward than one hundred purses of gold," remarked the eunuch. "The reward is proportioned to the exigency of the case. Believe me, worthy sir, it is desperate."

"With mortal means," replied the Armenian; "but I possess a talisman of magical influence, which no disorder can resist. I would fain try its efficacy."

"This is not the first talisman that has been offered us, worthy doctor," said the eunuch, smiling incredulously.

"But the first that has been offered on these terms," said the Armenian. "Let me cure the captive, and of the one hundred purses, a moiety shall belong to yourself. Ay! so confident am I of success, that I deem it no hazard to commence our contract by this surety." And so saying, the Armenian took from his finger a gorgeous carbuncle, and offered it to the eunuch. The worthy dependant of the seraglio had a great taste in jewellery. He examined the stone with admiration, and placed it on his finger with complacency. "I require no inducements to promote the interests of science, and the purposes of charity," said the eunuch, with a patronising air. "'Tis assuredly a pretty stone, and, as the memorial of an ingenious stranger, whom I respect, I shall, with pleasure, retain it. You were saying something about a talisman. Are you serious? I doubt not that there are means which might obtain you the desired trial; but the Prince Mahomed is as violent when displeased or disappointed as munificent when gratified. Cure this Christian captive, and we may certainly receive the promised purses; fail, and your head will as assuredly be flung into the seraglio moat, to say nothing of my own."

"Most noble sir!" said the physician; "I am willing to undertake the experiment on the terms you mentioned. Rest assured that the patient, if alive, must, with this remedy, speedily recover. You marvel! Believe me, had you witnessed the cures which it has already effected, you would only wonder at its otherwise incredible influence."

"You have the advantage," replied the eunuch, "of addressing a man who has seen something of the world. I travel every year to Anatolia with the Prince Mahomed. Were I a narrow-minded bigot, who had never been five miles from Adrianople in the whole course of my life, I might indeed be skeptical. But I am a patron of science, and have heard of talismans. How much might this ring weigh, think you!"

"I have heard it spoken of as a carbuncle of uncommon size," replied the Armenian.

"Where did you say you lodged, hakim?"

"At the khan of Bedreddin."

"A very proper dwelling. Well, we shall see. Have you more jewels? I might, perhaps, put you in the way of parting with some at good prices. The khan of Bedreddin is very conveniently situated. I may, perhaps, towards evening, taste your coffee at the khan of Bedreddin, and we will talk of this said talisman. Allah be with you, worthy hakim!" The eunuch nodded, not without encouragement, and went his way.

"Anxiety alone enabled me to keep my countenance," said Nicusa. "A patron of science, forsooth! Of all the insolent, shallow-brained, rapacious coxcombs——"

"Hush, my friend!" said Iskander, with a smile. "The chief eunuch of the heir apparent of the Turkish empire is a far greater man than a poor prince, or a proscribed rebel. This worthy can do our business, and I trust will. He clearly bites, and a richer bait will, perhaps, secure him. In the mean time, we must be patient, and remember whose destiny is at stake."

X.

The chief eunuch did not keep the adventurous companions long in suspense; for before the mazzin had announced the close of day from the minarets, he had reached the khan of Bedreddin, and inquired for the Armenian physician.

"We have no time to lose," said the eunuch to Iskander. "Bring with you whatever you may require, and follow me."

The eunuch led the way, Iskander and Nicusa maintaining a respectful distance. After proceeding down several streets, they arrived at the burial-ground, where they had conversed in the morning; and when they had entered this more retired spot, the eunuch fell back, and addressed his companion.

"Now, worthy hakim," he said, "if you deceive me, I will never patronise a man of science again. I found an opportunity of speaking to the prince this afternoon of your talisman, and he has taken from my representations such a fancy for its immediate proof, that I found it quite impossible to postpone its trial even until to-morrow. I mentioned the terms. I told the prince your life was the pledge. I said nothing of the moiety of the reward, worthy hakim. That is an affair between ourselves. I trust to your honour, and I always act thus with men of science."

"I shall not disgrace my profession or your confidence, rest assured," replied Iskander. "And am I to see the captive to-night?"

"I doubt it not. Are you prepared? We might, perhaps, gain a little time, if very necessary."

"By no means, sir; truth is ever prepared."

Thus conversing, they passed through the burial-ground, and approached some high, broad walls, forming a terrace, and planted with young acorn-trees. The eunuch tapped, with his silver stick, at a small gate, which opened and admitted them into a garden, full of large clumps of mossy shrubs. Through these a winding walk led for some way, and then conducted them to an open lawn, on which was situated a vast and irregular building. As they approached the pile, a young man of very imperious aspect rushed forward from a gate, and abruptly accosted Iskander.

"Are you the Armenian physician?" he inquired.

Iskander bowed assent.

"Have you got your talisman? You know the terms? Cure this Christian girl, and you shall name your own reward; fail, and I shall claim your forfeited head."

"The terms are well understood, mighty prince," said Iskander, for the young man was no less a personage than the son of Amurath, and future conqueror of Constantinople; "but I am confident there will be no necessity for the terror of Christendom claiming any other heads than those of his enemies."

"Kafis will conduct you at once to your patient," said Mahomed. "For myself, I cannot rest until I know the result of your visit. I shall wander about these gardens, and destroy the flowers, which is the only pleasure now left me."

Kafis motioned to his companions to advance, and they entered the seraglio.

At the end of a long gallery they came to a great portal, which Kafis opened, and Iskander and Nicæus for a moment supposed that they had arrived at the chief hall of the tower of Babel, but they found the shrill din only proceeded from a large company of women, who were employed in distilling the rare atar of the jessamine flower. All their voices ceased on the entrance of the strangers, as if by a miracle; but when they had examined them, and observed that it was only a physician and his boy, their awe, or their surprise, disappeared; and they crowded round Iskander, some holding out their wrists, others lolling out their tongues, and some asking questions, which perplexed alike the skill and the modesty of the adventurous dealer in magical medicine. The annoyance, however, was not of great duration, for Kafis so belaboured their fair shoulders with his official baton, that they instantly retreated with precipitation, uttering the most violent shrieks, and bestowing on the eunuch so many titles, that Iskander and his page were quite astounded at the intuitive knowledge which the imprisoned damsels possessed of that vocabulary of abuse, which is in general mastered only by the experience of active existence.

Quitting this chamber, the eunuch and his companions ascended a lofty staircase. They halted, at length, before a door. "This is the chamber of the tower," said their guide, "and here we shall find the fair captive." He knocked, the door was opened by a female slave, and Iskander and Nicæus, with an anxiety they could with difficulty conceal, were ushered into a small but sumptuous apartment. In the extremity was a recess covered with a light gauzy curtain. The eunuch bidding them keep in the background, advanced, and cautiously withdrawing the curtain slightly aside, addressed some words in a low voice to the inmate of the recess. In a few minutes the eunuch beckoned to Iskander to advance, and whispered to him: "She would not at first see you, but I have told her you are a Christian, the more the pity, and she consents." So saying, he withdrew the curtain, and exhibited a veiled female figure lying on a couch.

"Noble lady," said the physician in Greek, which he had ascertained the eunuch did not comprehend; "pardon the zeal of a Christian friend. Though habited in this garb, I have served under your illustrious sire. I should deem my life well spent in serving the daughter of the great Hunniades."

"Kind stranger," replied the captive, "I was ill-prepared for such a meeting. I thank you for your

sympathy, but my sad fortunes are beyond human aid."

"God works by humble instruments, noble lady," said Iskander, "and with his blessing we may yet prosper."

"I fear that I must look to death as my only refuge," replied Iduna, "and still more, I fear that it is not so present a refuge as my oppressors themselves imagine. But you are a physician; tell me then how speedily nature will make me free."

She held forth her hand, which Iskander took and involuntarily pressed. "Noble lady," he said, "my skill is mere pretence to enter these walls. The only talisman I bear with me is a message from your friends."

"Indeed!" said Iduna, in a very agitated tone.

"Restrain yourself, noble lady," said Iskander, interposing, "restrain yourself. Were you any other but the daughter of Hunniades, I would not have ventured upon this perilous exploit. But I know that the Lady Iduna has inherited something more than the name of her great ancestors—their heroic soul. If ever there were a moment in her life in which it behoved her to exert all her energies, that moment has arrived. The physician who addresses her, and his attendant who waits at hand, are two of the Lady Iduna's most devoted friends. There is nothing that they will not hazard to effect her delivery; and they have matured a plan of escape which they are sanguine must succeed. Yet its completion will require, on her part, great anxiety of mind, greater exertion of body, danger, fatigue, privation. Is the Lady Iduna prepared for all this endurance, and all this hazard?"

"Noble friend," replied Iduna, "for I cannot deem you a stranger, and none but a most chivalric knight could have entered upon this almost forlorn adventure; you have not, I trust, miscalculated my character. I am a slave, and unless Heaven will interpose, must soon be a dishonoured one. My freedom and my fame are alike at stake. There is no danger, and no suffering which I will not gladly welcome, provided there be even a remote chance of regaining my liberty and securing my honour."

"You are in the mind I counted on. Now, mark my words, dear lady. Seize an opportunity this evening of expressing to your jailers that you have already experienced some benefit from my visit, and announce your rising confidence in my skill. In the mean time I will make such a report that our daily meetings will not be difficult. For the present, farewell. The Prince Mahomed waits without, and I would exchange some words with him before I go."

"And must we part without my being acquainted with the generous friends to whom I am indebted for an act of devotion which almost reconciles me to my sad fate?" said Iduna. "You will not, perhaps, deem the implicit trust reposed in you by one whom you have no interest to deceive, and who, if deceived, cannot be placed in a worse position than she at present fills, as a very gratifying mark of confidence, yet that trust is reposed in you; and let me at least soothe the galling dreariness of my solitary hours, by the recollection of the friends to whom I am indebted for a deed of friendship which has filled me with a feeling of wonder from which I have not yet recovered."

"The person who has penetrated the seraglio of Constantinople in disguise, to rescue the Lady Iduna," answered Iskander, "is the Prince Nicæus."

"Nicæus!" exclaimed Iduna, in an agitated tone.

"The voice to which I listen is surely not that of the Prince Nicæus; nor the form on which I gaze," she added, as she unveiled. Beside her stood the tall figure of the Armenian physician. She beheld his swarthy and unrecognised countenance. She cast her dark eyes around with an air of beautiful perplexity.

"I am a friend of the Prince Nicæus," said the physician. "He is here. Shall he advance? Alexis," called out Iskander, not waiting for her reply. The page of the physician came forward, but the eunuch accompanied him. "All is right," said Iskander to Kaffis. "We are sure of our hundred purses. But, without doubt, with any other aid, the case were desperate."

"There is but one God," said the eunuch, polishing his carbuncle, with a visage radiant as the gem. "I never repented patronising men of science. The prince waits without. Come along." He took Iskander by the arm. "Where is your boy? What are you doing there, sir?" inquired the eunuch, sharply, of Nicæus, who was tarrying behind and kissing the hand of Iduna.

"I was asking the lady for a favour to go to the coffee-house with," replied Nicæus, with pouting lips; "you forget that I am to have none of the hundred purses."

"True," said the eunuch; "there is something in that. Here, boy, here is a piastre for you. I like to encourage men of science, and all that belong to them. Do not go and spend it all in one morning, boy, and when the fair captive is cured, if you remind me, boy, perhaps I may give you another."

XI.

KAFFIS and his charge again reached the garden. The twilight was nearly past. A horseman galloped up to them, followed by several running footmen. It was the prince.

"Well, hakim," he inquired, in his usual abrupt style, "can you cure her?"

"Yes," answered Iskander, firmly.

"Now listen, hakim," said Mahomed. "I must very shortly leave the city, and proceed into Epirus at the head of our troops. I have sworn two things, and I have sworn them by the holy stone. Ere the new moon, I will have the heart of Iduna and the head of Iskander!"

The physician bowed.

"If you can so restore the health of this frangy girl," continued Mahomed, "that she may attend me within ten days into Epirus, you shall claim from my treasury what sum you like, and become physician to the seraglio. What say you?"

"My hope and my belief is," replied Iskander, "that within ten days she may breathe the air of Epirus."

"By my father's beard, you are a man after my own heart," exclaimed the prince; "and since thou dealest in talismans, hakim, can you give me a charm that will secure me a meeting with this Epirot rebel within the term, so that I may keep my oath. What say you?—what say you?"

"There are such spells," replied Iskander. "But mark, I can only secure the meeting, not the head."

"That is my part," said Mahomed, with an arrogant sneer. "But the meeting, the meeting!"

"You know the fountain of Kallista in Epirus. Its virtues are renowned."

"I have heard of it."

"Plunge your cimeter in its midnight waters thrice, on the eve of the new moon, and each time summon the enemy you would desire to meet. He will not fail you."

"If you cure the captive, I will credit the legend, and keep the appointment," replied Mahomed, thoughtfully.

"I have engaged to do that," replied the physician.

"Well, then, I shall redeem my pledge," said the prince.

"But mind," said the physician, "while I engage to cure the lady, and produce the warrior, I can secure your highness neither the heart of the one nor the head of the other."

"Tis understood," said Mahomed.

XII.

THE Armenian physician did not fail to attend his captive patient at an early hour on the ensuing morn. His patron Kaffis received him with an encouraging smile. "The talisman already works," said the eunuch: "she has passed a good night, and confesses to an improvement. Our purses are safe. Methinks I already count the gold. But I say, worthy hakim, come hither, come hither," and Kaffis looked around to be sure that no one was within hearing. "I say," and here he put on a very mysterious air indeed, "the prince is generous: you understand? We go shares. We shall not quarrel. I never yet repented patronising a man of science, and I am sure I never shall. The prince you see is violent, but generous. I would not cure her too soon, eh?"

"You take a most discreet view of affairs," responded Iskander, with an air of complete assent, and they entered the chamber of the tower.

Iduna performed her part with great dexterity; but indeed it required less skill than herself and her advisers had at first imagined. Her malady, although it might have ended fatally, was, in its origin, entirely mental, and the sudden prospect of freedom, and of restoration to her country and her family, at a moment when she had delivered herself up to despair, afforded her a great and instantaneous benefit. She could not indeed sufficiently restrain her spirits, and smiled incredulously when Iskander mentioned the impending exertion and fatigues, with doubt and apprehension. His anxiety to return immediately to Epirus, determined him to adopt the measures for her rescue without loss of time, and on his third visit, he prepared her for making the great attempt on the ensuing morn. Hitherto Iskander had refrained from revealing himself to Iduna. He was induced to adopt this conduct by various considerations. He could no longer conceal from himself that the daughter of Hunniades exercised an influence over his feelings which he was unwilling to encourage. His sincere friendship for Nicæus, and his conviction that it was his present duty to concentrate all his thought and affection in the cause of his country, would have rendered him anxious to have resisted any emotions of the kind, even could he have flattered himself that there was any chance of their being returned by the object of his rising passion. But Iskander was as modest as he was brave and gifted. The disparity of age between himself and Iduna appeared an insuperable barrier to his hopes, even had there been no other obstacle.

Iskander struggled with his love, and with his strong mind the struggle, though painful, was not without success. He felt that he was acting, in a manner which must ultimately tend to the advantage of his country, the happiness of his friend, and perhaps the maintenance of his own self-respect; for he had too much pride not to be very sensible to the bitterness of rejection.

Had he perceived more indications of a very cordial feeling subsisting between Nicæus and Iduna, he would, perhaps, not have persisted in maintaining his disguise. But he had long suspected that the passion of the Prince of Athens was not too favourably considered by the daughter of Hunniades, and he was therefore exceedingly anxious that Nicæus should possess all the credit of the present adventure, which Iskander scarcely doubted, if successful, would allow Nicæus to urge irresistible claims to the heart of a mistress whom he had rescued, at the peril of his life, from slavery and dishonour, to offer rank, reputation, and love. Iskander took, therefore, several opportunities of leading Iduna to believe that he was merely a confidential agent of Nicæus, and that the whole plan of her rescue from the seraglio of Adrianople had been planned by his young friend. In the mean time, during the three days on which they had for short intervals met, very few words had been interchanged between Nicæus and his mistress. Those words, indeed, had been to him of the most inspiring nature, and expressed such a deep sense of gratitude, and such lively regard, that Nicæus could no longer resist the delightful conviction that he had at length created a permanent interest in her heart. Often he longed to rush to her couch, and press her hand to his lips. Even the anticipation of future happiness could not prevent him from envying the good fortune of Iskander, who was allowed to converse with her without restraint; and bitterly, on their return to the khan, did he execrate the pompous eunuch for all the torture which he occasioned him by his silly conversation, and the petty tyranny of office with which Kafis always repressed his attempts to converse for a moment with Iduna.

In the mean time all Adrianople sounded with the preparations for the immediate invasion of Epirus, and the return of Iskander to his country became each hour more urgent. Every thing being prepared, the adventurers determined on the fourth morning to attempt the rescue. They repaired as usual to the serail, and were attended by Kafis to the chamber of the tower, who congratulated Iskander on their way on the rapid convalescence of the captive. When they had fairly entered the chamber, the physician being somewhat in advance, Nicæus, who was behind, commenced proceedings by knocking down the eunuch, and Iskander instantly turning round to his assistance, they succeeded in gagging and binding the alarmed and astonished Kafis. Iduna then habited herself in a costume exactly similar to that worn by Nicæus, and which her friends had brought to her in their bag. Iskander and Iduna then immediately quitted the serail without notice or suspicion, and hurried to the khan, where they mounted their horses, that were in readiness, and hastened without a moment's loss of time to a fountain without the gates, where they awaited the arrival of Nicæus with anxiety. After remaining a few minutes in the chamber of the tower, the Prince of Athens stole out, taking

care to secure the door upon Kafis. He descended the staircase, and escaped through the serail without meeting any one, and had nearly reached the gate of the gardens, when he was challenged by some of the eunuch guard at a little distance.

"Hilloa!" exclaimed one, "I thought you passed just now?"

"So I did," replied Nicæus, with nervous effrontery; "but I came back for my bag, which I left behind," and giving them no time to reflect, he pushed his way through the gate with all the impudence of a page. He rushed through the burial ground, hurried through the streets, mounted his horse, and galloped through the gates. Iskander and Iduna were in sight, he waved his hand for them at once to proceed, and in a moment, without exchanging a word, they were all galloping at full speed, nor did they breathe their horses until sunset.

By nightfall they had reached a small wood of chestnut trees, where they rested for two hours, more for the sake of their steeds than their own refreshment, for anxiety prevented Iduna from indulging in any repose, as much as excitement prevented her from feeling any fatigue. Iskander lit a fire and prepared their rough meal, unharnessed the horses, and turned them out to their pasture. Nicæus made Iduna a couch of fern, and supported her head, while, in deference to his entreaties, she endeavoured in vain to sleep. Before midnight they were again on their way, and proceeded at a rapid pace towards the mountains, until a few hours before noon, when their horses began to sink under the united influence of their previous exertions and the increasing heat of the day. Iskander looked serious, and often threw a backward glance in the direction of Adrianople.

"We must be beyond pursuit," said Nicæus. "I dare say poor Kafis is still gagged and bound."

"Could we but once reach the mountains," replied his companion, "I should have little fear, but I counted upon our steeds carrying us there without faltering. We cannot reckon upon more than three hours' start, prince. Our friend Kafis is too important a personage to be long missed."

"The holy Virgin befriend us!" said the Lady Iduna. "I can urge my poor horse no more."

They had now ascended a small rising ground, which gave them a wide prospect over the plain. Iskander halted, and threw an anxious glance around him.

"There are some horsemen in the distance whom I do not like," said the physician.

"I see them," said Nicæus; "travellers like ourselves."

"Let us die sooner than be taken," said Iduna.

"Move on," said the physician, "and let me observe these horsemen alone. I would there were some forest at hand. In two hours we may gain the mountains."

The daughter of Hunniades and the Prince of Athens descended the rising ground. Before them, but at a considerable distance, was a broad and rapid river, crossed by a ruinous Roman bridge. The opposite bank of the river was the termination of a narrow plain, which led immediately to the mountains.

"Fair Iduna, you are safe," said the Prince of Athens.

"Dear Nicæus," replied his companion, "imagine what I feel. It is too wild a moment to express my gratitude."

"I trust that Iduna will never express her *gratitude* to Nicæus," answered the prince; "it is not, I assure you, a favourite word with him."

Their companion rejoined them, urging his wearied horse to its utmost speed.

"Nicæus!" he called out, "halt!"

They stopped their willing horses.

"How now!" my friend," said the prince; "you look grave!"

"Lady Iduna!" said the Armenian, "we are pursued."

Hitherto the prospect of success, and the consciousness of the terrible destiny that awaited failure, had supported Iduna under exertions which, under any other circumstances, must have proved fatal. But to learn, at the very moment that she was congratulating herself on the felicitous completion of their daring enterprise, that that dreaded failure was absolutely impending, demanded too great an exertion of her exhausted energies. She turned pale; she lifted up her imploring hands and eyes to heaven in speechless agony, and then bending down her head, wept with unrestrained and harrowing violence. The distracted Nicæus sprung from his horse, endeavoured to console the almost insensible Iduna, and then wofully glancing at his fellow-adventurer, wrung his hands in despair. His fellow-adventurer seemed lost in thought.

"They come," said Nicæus, starting; "methinks I see one on the brow of the hill. Away! fly! Let us at least die fighting. Dear, dear Iduna, would that my life could ransom thine. O God! this is indeed agony."

"Escape is impossible," said Iduna, in a tone of calmness which astonished them. "They must overtake us. Alas! brave friends, I have brought ye to this! Pardon me! pardon me! I am ashamed of my selfish grief. Ascribe it to other causes than a narrow spirit and a weak mind. One course is alone left to us. We must not be taken prisoners. Ye are warriors, and can die as such. I am only a woman, but I am the daughter of Hunniades. Nicæus, you are my father's friend; I beseech you, sheathe your dagger in my breast."

The prince in silent agony pressed his hands to his sight. His limbs quivered with terrible emotion. Suddenly he advanced and threw himself at the feet of his hitherto silent comrade. "O! Iskander!" exclaimed Nicæus, "great and glorious friend! my head and heart are both too weak for these awful trials—save her, save her!"

"Iskander!" exclaimed the thunderstruck Iduna. "Iskander!"

"I have, indeed, the misfortune to be Iskander, beloved lady," he replied. "This is, indeed, a case almost of desperation, but if I have to endure more than most men, I have, to inspire me, influences which fall to the lot of few—yourself and Epirus. Come! Nicæus, there is but one chance—we must gain the bridge." Thus speaking, Iskander caught Iduna in his arms, and remounting his steed, and followed by the Prince of Athens, hurried towards the river.

"The water is not fordable," said Iskander, when they had arrived at its bank. "The bridge I shall defend; and it will go hard if I do not keep them at bay long enough for you and Iduna to gain the mountains. Away; think no more of me; nay! no tear, dear lady, or you will unman me. An inspiring smile, and all will go well. Hasten to Croia, and let nothing tempt you to linger in the

vicinity, with the hope of my again joining you. Believe me, we shall meet again, but act upon what I say, as if they were my dying words. God bless you, Nicæus! No murmuring. For once let the physician, indeed, command his page. Gentle lady, commend me to your father. Would I had such a daughter in Epirus, to head my trusty brethren if I fall! Tell the great Hunniades, my legacy to him is my country. Farewell, farewell!"

"I will not say farewell," exclaimed Iduna, "I too can fight. I will stay and die with you."

"See, they come! Believe me, I shall conquer. Fly, fly, thou noble girl! Guard her well, Nicæus. God bless thee, boy! Live and be happy. Nay, nay, not another word. The farther ye are both distant, trust me, the stronger will be my arm. Indeed, indeed, I do beseech ye, fly!"

Nicæus placed the weeping Iduna in her saddle, and after leading her horse over the narrow and broken bridge, mounted his own, and then they ascended together the hilly and winding track. Iskander watched them as they went. Often Iduna waved her kerchief to her forlorn champion. In the mean time Iskander tore off his Armenian robes and flung them into the river, tried his footing on the position he had taken up, stretched his limbs, examined his daggers, flourished his cimeter.

The bridge would only permit a single rider to pass abreast. It was supported by three arches, the centre one of very considerable size, the others small, and rising out of the shallow water on each side. In many parts the parapet wall was broken, in some even the pathway was almost impassable, from the masses of fallen stone and the dangerous fissures. In the centre of the middle arch was an immense key-stone, on which was sculptured, in high relief, an enormous helmet, which indeed gave among the people of the country, a title to the bridge.

A band of horsemen dashed at full speed, with a loud shout, down the hill. They checked their horses, when to their astonishment they found Iskander with his drawn cimeter, prepared to resist their passage. But they paused only for a moment, and immediately attempted to swim the river. But their exhausted horses drew back with a strong instinct from the rushing waters: one of the band alone, mounted on a magnificent black mare, succeeding in his purpose. The rider was halfway in the stream, his high-bred steed snorting and struggling in the strong current. Iskander, with the same ease as if he were plucking the ripe fruit from a tree, took up a ponderous stone, and hurled it with fatal precision at his adventurous enemy. The rider shrieked and fell, and rose no more: the mare, relieved from her burden, exerted all her failing energies, and succeeded in gaining the opposite bank. There, rolling herself in the welcome pasture, and neighing with a note of triumph, she revelled in her hard escape.

"Cut down the Giaour!" exclaimed one of the horsemen, and he dashed at the bridge. His fragile blade shivered into a thousand pieces as it crossed the cimeter of Iskander, and in a moment his bleeding head fell over the parapet.

Instantly the whole band, each emulous of revenging his comrades, rushed without thought at Iskander, and endeavoured to overpower him by their irresistible charge. His cimeter flashed like lightning. The two foremost of his enemies fell

but the impulse of the numbers prevailed, and each instant, although dealing destruction with every blow, he felt himself losing ground. At length he was on the centre of the centre arch, an eminent position, which allowed him for a moment to keep them at bay, and gave him breathing-time. Suddenly he made a desperate charge, clove the head of the leader of the band in two, and beat them back several yards; then swiftly returning to his former position, he summoned all his supernatural strength, and stamping on the mighty, but mouldering key-stone, he forced it from its form, and broke the masonry of a thousand years. Amid a loud and awful shriek, horses and horsemen, and the dissolving fragments of the scene for a moment mingled, as it were, in airy chaos, and then plunged with a horrible plash into the fatal depths below. Some fell, and, stunned by the massy fragments, rose no more; others struggled again into light, and gained with difficulty their old shore. Amid them, Iskander, unhurt, swam like a river-god, and stabbed to the heart the only strong swimmer that was making his way in the direction of Epirus. Drenched and exhausted, Iskander at length stood upon the opposite margin, and wrang his garments, while he watched the scene of strange destruction.

Three or four exhausted wretches were lying bruised and breathless on the opposite bank: one drowned horse was stranded near them, caught by the rushes. Of all that brave company the rest had vanished, and the broad, and blue, and sunny waters rushed without a shadow beneath the two remaining arches.

"Iduna! thou art safe," exclaimed Iskander. "Now for Epirus!" So saying, he seized the black mare, renovated by her bath and pasture, and vaulting on her back, was in a few minutes bounding over his native hills.

XIII.

IN the mean time let us not forget the Prince of Athens and the Lady Iduna. These adventurous companions soon lost sight of their devoted champion, and entered a winding ravine, which gradually brought them to the summit of the first chain of the Epirot mountains. From it they looked down upon a vast and rocky valley, through which several mule tracks led in various directions, and entered the highest barrier of the mountains which rose before them, covered with forests of chestnut and ilex. Niceus chose the track which he considered least tempting to pursuit, and towards sunset they had again entered a ravine washed by a mountain stream. The course of the waters had made the earth fertile and beautiful. Wild shrubs of gay and pleasant colours refreshed their wearied eyesight, and the perfumes of aromatic plants invigorated their jaded senses. Upon the bank, too, of the river, a large cross of roughly carved wood brought comfort to their Christian hearts, and while the holy emblem filled them with hope and consolation, and seemed an omen of refuge from their Moslem oppressors, a venerable hermit, with a long white beard descending over his dark robes, and leaning on a staff of thorn, came forth from an adjoining cavern to breathe the evening air and pour forth his evening orisons.

Iduna and Niceus had hitherto prosecuted their sorrowful journey almost in silence. Exhausted with anxiety, affliction, and bodily fatigue, with

difficulty the daughter of Hunniades could preserve her seat upon her steed. One thought alone interested her, and, by its engrossing influence, maintained her under all sufferings—the memory of Iskander. Since she first met him, at the extraordinary interview in her father's pavilion, often had the image of the hero recurred to her fancy, often had she mused over his great qualities and strange career. His fame, so dangerous to female hearts, was not diminished by his presence. And now, when Iduna recollected that she was indebted to him for all that she held dear, that she owed to his disinterested devotion, not only life, but all that renders life desirable,—honour and freedom, country and kindred,—that image was invested with associations and with sentiments, which, had Iskander himself been conscious of their existence, would have lent redoubled vigour to his arm, and fresh inspiration to his energy. More than once Iduna had been on the point of inquiring of Niceus the reason which had induced alike him and Iskander to preserve so strictly the disguise of his companion. But a feeling which she did not choose to analyze, struggled successfully with her curiosity: she felt a reluctance to speak of Iskander to the Prince of Athens. In the mean time, Niceus himself was not apparently very anxious of conversing upon the subject, and after the first rapid expressions of fear and hope as to the situation of their late comrade, they relapsed into silence, seldom broken by Niceus, but to deplore the sufferings of his mistress,—lamentations which Iduna answered with a faint smile.

The refreshing scene wherein they had now entered, and the cheering appearance of the hermits were subjects of mutual congratulation, and Niceus, somewhat advancing, claimed the attention of the holy man, announcing their faith, imprisonment, escape, and sufferings, and entreating hospitality and refuge. The hermit pointed with his staff to the winding path, which ascended the bank of the river to the cavern, and welcomed the pilgrims in the name of their blessed Saviour to his wild abode and simple fare.

The cavern widened when they entered, and comprised several small apartments. It was a work of the early Christians, who had found a refuge in their days of persecution, and art had completed the beneficent design of nature. The cavern was fresh, and sweet, and clean. Heaven smiled upon its pious inmate through an aperture in the roof; the floor was covered with rushes; in one niche rested a brazen cross, and in another a perpetual lamp burned before a picture, where Madonna smiled with meek tenderness upon her young divinity.

The hermit placed upon a block of wood, the surface of which he had himself smoothed, some honey, some dried fish, and a wooden bowl filled with the pure stream that flowed beneath them: a simple meal but welcome. His guests seated themselves upon a rushy couch, and while they refreshed themselves, he gently inquired the history of their adventures. As it was evident that the hermit, from her apparel, mistook the sex of Iduna, Niceus thought fit not to deceive him, but passed her off as his brother. He described themselves as two Athenian youths, who had been captured while serving as volunteers under the great Hunniades, and who had effected their escape from Adrianople under circumstances of great peril and

difficulty; and when he had gratified the eremite's curiosity respecting their Christian brethren in Paynim lands, and sympathetically marvelled with him at the advancing fortunes of the crescent, Nicæus, who perceived that Iduna stood in great need of rest, mentioned the fatigues of his more fragile brother, and requested permission for him to retire. Whereupon the eremite himself, fetching a load of fresh rushes, arranged them in one of the cells, and invited the fair Iduna to repose. The daughter of Hunniades, first humbling herself before the altar of the Virgin, and offering her gratitude for all the late mercies vouchsafed unto her, and then bidding a word of peace to her host and her companion, withdrew to her hard-earned couch, and soon was buried in a sleep as sweet and innocent as herself.

But repose fell not upon the eyelids of Nicæus in spite of all his labours. The heart of the Athenian prince was distracted by the two most powerful of passions—love and jealousy—and when the eremite, pointing out to his guest his allotted resting-place, himself retired to his regular and simple slumbers, Nicæus quitted the cavern, and standing upon the bank of the river, gazed in abstraction upon the rushing waters foaming in the moonlight. The Prince of Athens, with many admirable qualities, was one of those men who are influenced only by their passions, and who, in the affairs of life, are invariably guided by their imagination instead of their reason. At present all thought and feeling, all considerations, and all circumstances, merged in the overpowering love he entertained for Iduna, his determination to obtain her at all cost and peril, and his resolution that she should never again meet Iskander, except as the wife of Nicæus. Compared with this paramount object, the future seemed to vanish. The emancipation of his country, the welfare of his friend, even the maintenance of his holy creed, all those great and noble objects for which, under other circumstances, he would have been prepared to sacrifice his fortune and his life, no longer interested or influenced him; and while the legions of the crescent were on the point of pouring into Greece to crush that patriotic and Christian cause over which Iskander and himself had so often mused, whose interests the disinterested absence of Iskander, occasioned solely by his devotion to Nicæus, had certainly endangered, and, perhaps, could the events of the last few hours be known, even sacrificed, the Prince of Athens resolved, unless Iduna would consent to become his, at once to carry off the daughter of Hunniades to some distant country. Nor, indeed, even with his easily excited vanity, was Nicæus sanguine of obtaining his purpose by less violent means. He was already a rejected suitor, and under circumstances which scarcely had left hope. Nothing but the sole credit of her chivalric rescue could perhaps have obtained for him the interest in the heart of Iduna which he coveted. For while this exploit proffered an irresistible claim to her deepest gratitude, it indicated also, on the part of her deliverer, the presence and possession of all those great qualities, the absence of which in the character and conduct of her suitor, Iduna had not, at a former period, endeavoured to conceal to be the principal cause of his rejection. And now, by the unhappy course of circumstances, the very deed on which he counted, with sanguine hope, as the sure means of his success, seemed as it were to have placed him

in a still inferior situation than before. The constant society of his mistress had fanned the flame which, apart from her and hopeless, he had endeavoured to repress, to all its former force and ardour; while, on the other hand, he could not conceal from himself, that Iduna must feel that he had played in these great proceedings but a secondary part; that all the genius and all the generosity of the exploit rested with Iskander, who, after having obtained her freedom by so much energy, peril, sagacity, and skill, had secured it by a devoted courage which might shame all the knights of Christendom, perhaps, too, had secured it by his own life.

What if Iskander were no more? It was a great contingency. The eternal servitude of Greece, and the shameful triumph of the crescent, were involved, perhaps, in that single event. And could the possession of Iduna compensate for such disgrace and infamy? Let us not record the wild response of passion.

It was midnight ere the restless Nicæus, more exhausted by his agitating reverie, than by his previous exertions, returned into the cavern, and found refuge in sleep from all his disquietudes.

XIV.

THE eremite rose with the sun: and while he was yet at matins, was joined by Iduna, refreshed and cheerful after her unusual slumbers. After performing their devotions, her venerable host proposed that they should go forth and enjoy the morning air. So, descending the precipitous bank of the river, he led the way to a small glen, the bed of a tributary rivulet, now nearly exhausted. Beautiful clumps of birch trees, and tall thin poplars, rose on each side among the rocks, which were covered with bright mosses, and parasitical plants of gay and various colours. One side of the glen was touched with the golden and grateful beams of the rising sun, and the other was in deep shadow.

"Here you can enjoy nature and freedom in security," said the eremite: "for your enemies, if they have not already given up their pursuit, will scarcely search this sweet solitude."

"It is indeed sweet, holy father," said Iduna "but the captive, who has escaped from captivity, can alone feel all its sweetness."

"It is true," said the eremite; "I also have been a captive."

"Indeed! holy father. To the infidels?"

"To the infidels, gentle pilgrim."

"Have you been at Adrianople?"

"My oppressors were not the Paynim," replied the eremite, "but they were enemies far more dire—my own evil passions. Time was when my eye sparkled like thine, gentle pilgrim, and my heart was not as pure."

"God is merciful," said Iduna, "and without his aid, the strongest are but shadows."

"Ever think so," replied the eremite, "and you will deserve rather his love than his mercy. Thirty long years have I spent in this solitude, meditating upon the past, and it is a theme yet fertile in instruction. My hours are never heavy, and memory is to me what action is to other men."

"You have seen much, holy father?"

"And felt more. Yet you will perhaps think the result of all my experience very slight, for I can only say unto thee, Trust not in thyself."

"It is a great truth," remarked Iduna, "and leads to a higher one."

"Even so," replied the hermit. "We are full of wisdom in old age, as in winter this river is full of water, but the fire of youth, like the summer sun, dries up the stream."

Iduna did not reply. The hermit attracted her attention to a patch of cresses on the opposite bank of the stream. "Every morn I rise only to discover fresh instances of omnipotent benevolence," he exclaimed. "Yesterday ye tasted my honey and my fish. To-day I can offer ye a fresh dainty. We will break our fast in this pleasant glen. Rest thou here, gentle youth, and I will summon thy brother to our meal. I fear me much he does not bear so contented a spirit as thyself."

"He is older, and has seen more," replied Iduna.

The hermit shook his head, and leaning on his staff, returned to the cavern. Iduna remained, seated on a mossy rock, listening to the awaking birds, and musing over the fate of Iskander. While she was indulging in this reverie, her name was called. She looked up with a blush, and beheld Niceus.

"How fares my gentle comrade?" inquired the Prince of Athens.

"As well as I hope you are, dear Niceus. We have been indeed fortunate in finding so kind a host."

"I think I may now congratulate you on your safety," said the prince. "This unfrequented pass will lead us in two days to Epirus, nor do I indeed now fear pursuit."

"Acts and not words must express in future how much we owe to you," said Iduna. "My joy would be complete if my father only knew of our safety, and if our late companion were here to share it."

"Fear not for my friend," replied Niceus. "I have faith in the fortune of Iskander."

"If any one could succeed under such circumstances, he doubtless is the man," rejoined Iduna; "but it was indeed an awful crisis in his fate."

"Trust me, dear lady, it is wise to banish gloomy thoughts."

"We can give him only our thoughts," said Iduna, "and when we remember how much is dependent on his life, can they be cheerful?"

"Mine must be so, when I am in the presence of Iduna," replied Niceus.

The daughter of Hunniades gathered moss from the rock and threw it into the stream.

"Dear lady," said the Prince of Athens, seating himself by her side, and stealing her gentle hand. "Pardon me if an irrepressible feeling at this moment impels me to recur to a subject, which, I would fain hope, were not so unpleasant to you, as once so unhappily you deemed it. O! Iduna, Iduna, best and dearest, we are once more together; once more I gaze upon that unrivalled form, and listen to the music of that matchless voice. I sought you, I perhaps violated my pledge, but I sought you in captivity and sorrow. Pardon me, pity me, Iduna! O! Iduna, if possible, love me!"

She turned away her head, she turned away her streaming eyes. "It is impossible not to love my deliverer," she replied, in a low and tremulous voice, "even could he not prefer the many other claims to affection which are possessed by the Prince of Athens. I was not prepared for this renewal of a most painful subject, perhaps under no circumstances; but least of all under those in which we now find ourselves."

"Alas!" exclaimed the prince; "I can no longer control my passion. My life, not my happiness merely, depends upon Iduna becoming mine. Bear with me, my beloved, bear with me! Were you Niceus, you too would need forgiveness."

"I beseech you, cease!" exclaimed Iduna, in a firmer voice; and withdrawing her hand, she suddenly rose. "This is neither the time nor place for such conversation. I have not forgotten that, but a few days back, I was a hopeless captive, and that my life and fame are even now in danger. Great mercies have been vouchsafed to me; but still I perhaps need the hourly interposition of heavenly aid. Other than such worldly thoughts should fill my mind, and do. Dear Niceus," she continued, in a more soothing tone, "you have nobly commenced a most heroic enterprise; fulfil it in like spirit."

He would have replied; but at this moment, the staff of the hermit sounded among the rocks. Baffled, and dark with rage and passion, the Prince of Athens quitted Iduna, and strolled towards the upper part of the glen, to conceal his anger and disappointment.

"Eat, gentle youth," said the hermit.

"Will not thy brother join us? What may be his name?"

"Niceus, holy father."

"And thine?"

Iduna blushed and hesitated. At length, in her confusion, she replied "Iskander."

"Niceus!" called out the hermit, "Iskander and myself await thee!"

Iduna trembled. She was agreeably surprised when the prince returned with a smiling countenance, and joined in the meal, with many cheerful words.

"Now, I propose," said the hermit, "that yourself and your brother Iskander should tarry with me some days, if, indeed, my simple fare have any temptation."

"I thank thee, holy father," replied Niceus, "but our affairs are urgent; nor indeed could I have tarried here at all, had it not been for my young Iskander here, who, as you may easily believe, is little accustomed to his late exertions. But, indeed, towards sunset, we must proceed."

"Bearing with us," added Iduna, "a most grateful recollection of our host."

"God be with ye, wherever ye may proceed," replied the hermit.

"My trust is indeed in him," rejoined Iduna.

XV.

AND so, two hours before sunset, mounting their refreshed horses, Niceus and Iduna quitted, with many kind words, the cavern of the hermit, and took their way along the winding of the river. Throughout the moonlit night they travelled, ascending the last and highest chain of mountains, and reaching the summit by dawn. The cheerful light of morning revealed to them the happy plains of a Christian country. With joyful spirits they descended into fertile land, and stopped at a beautiful Greek village, embowered in orchards and groves of olive trees.

The Prince of Athens instantly inquired for the primate, or chief personage of the village, and was conducted to his house; but his master, he was informed, was without, supervising the commerce

ment of the vintage. Leaving Iduna with the family of the primate, Nicæus went in search of him. The vineyard was full of groups, busied in the most elegant and joyous of human occupations, gathering, with infinite bursts of merriment, the harvest of the vine. Some mounted on ladders, fixed against the festooning branches, plucked the rich bunches, and threw them below, where girls, singing in chorus, caught them in panniers, or their extended drapery. In the centre of the vineyard, a middle-aged man watched with a calm, but vigilant eye, the whole proceedings, and occasionally stimulated the indolent, or prompted the inexperienced.

"Christo!" said the Prince of Athens, when he had approached him. The primate turned round, but evidently did not immediately recognise the person who addressed him.

"I see," continued the prince, "that my meditated caution was unnecessary. My strange garb is a sufficient disguise."

"The Prince Nicæus!" exclaimed the primate. "He is, indeed, disguised, but will, I am sure, pardon his faithful servant."

"Not a word, Christo!" replied the prince. "To be brief. I have crossed the mountains from Roumelia, and have only within this hour recognised the spot whither I have chanced to arrive. I have a companion with me. I would not be known. You comprehend? Affairs of state. I take it for granted that there are none here who will recognise me, after three years' absence, in this dress."

"You may feel secure, my lord," replied Christo. "If you puzzled me, who have known you since you were no bigger than this bunch of grapes, you will quite confound the rest."

"Tis well. I shall stay here a day or two, in order to give them an opportunity to prepare for my reception. In the mean time, it is necessary to send on a courier at once. You must manage all this for me, Christo. How are your daughters?"

"So, so, please your highness," replied Christo. "A man with seven daughters has got trouble for every day in the week."

"But not when they are as pretty as yours are?"

"Poh! poh! Handsome is that handsome does; and as for Alexina, she wants to be married."

"Very natural. Let her marry, by all means."

"But Helena wants to do the same."

"More natural still; for, if possible, she is prettier. For my part, I could marry them both."

"Ay, ay! that is all very well; but handsome is that handsome does. I have no objection to Alexina marrying, and even Helena; but then there is Lais—"

"Hah! hah! hah!" exclaimed the prince. "I see, my dear Christo, that my foster sisters give you a proper portion of trouble. However, I must be off to my travelling companion. Come in as soon as you can, my dear fellow, and we will settle every thing. A good vintage to you, and only as much mischief as is necessary." So saying, the prince tripped away.

"Well! who would have thought of seeing him here!" exclaimed the worthy primate. "The same *gay dog* as ever! What can he have been doing in Roumelia? Affairs of state, indeed! I'll wager my new epiphany scarf, that, whatever the affairs are, there is a pretty girl in the case."

XVI.

THE fair Iduna, after all her perils and sufferings, was at length sheltered in safety under a kind and domestic roof. Alexina, and Helena, and Lais, and all the other sisters emulated each other in the attentions which they lavished upon the two brothers, but especially the youngest. Their kindness, indeed, was only equalled by their ceaseless curiosity, and had they ever waited for the answers of Iduna to their questions, the daughter of Humniades might, perhaps, have been somewhat puzzled to reconcile her responses with probability. Helena answered the questions of Alexina: Lais anticipated even Helena. All that Iduna had to do, was to smile and be silent, and it was universally agreed that Iskander was singularly shy as well as excessively handsome. In the mean time, when Nicæus met Iduna in the evening of the second day of their visit, he informed her that he had been so fortunate as to resume an acquaintance with an old companion in arms in the person of a neighbouring noble, who had invited them to rest at his castle at the end of their next day's journey. He told her likewise that he had despatched a courier to Chio to inquire after Iskander, who, he expected, in the course of a very few days, would bring them intelligence to guide their future movements, and decide whether they should at once proceed to the capital of Epirus, or advance into Bulgaria, in case Humniades was still in the field. On the morrow, therefore, they proceeded on their journey. Nicæus had procured a litter for Iduna, for which her delicate health was an excuse to Alexina and her sisters, and they were attended by a small body of well-armed cavalry, for, according to the accounts which Nicæus had received, the country was still disturbed. They departed at break of day, Nicæus riding by the side of the litter, and occasionally making the most anxious inquiries after the well-being of his fair charge. An hour after noon they rested at a well, surrounded by olive trees, until the extreme heat was somewhat allayed; and then remounting, proceeded in the direction of an undulating ridge of green hills, that partially intersected the wide plain. Towards sunset the Prince of Athens withdrew the curtains of the litter, and called the attention of Iduna to a very fair castle, rising on a fertile eminence and sparkling in the quivering beams of dying light.

"I fear," said Nicæus, "that my friend Justinien will scarcely have returned, but we are old comrades, and he desired me to act as his seneschal. For your sake I am sorry, Iduna, for I feel convinced that he would please you."

"It is, indeed, a fair castle," replied Iduna, "and none but a true knight deserves such a noble residence."

While she spoke, the commander of the escort sounded his bugle, and they commenced the ascent of the steep, a winding road, cut through a thick wood of evergreen shrubs. The gradual and easy ascent soon brought them to a portal flanked with towers, which admitted them into the outworks of the fortification. Here they found several soldiers on guard, and the commander again sounding his bugle, the gates of the castle opened, and the seneschal, attended by a suite of many domestics, advanced and welcomed Nicæus and Iduna. The Prince of Athens dismounting, welcomed him in

companion from the litter, and leading her by the hand, and preceded by the seneschal, entered the castle.

They passed through a magnificent hall, hung with choice armour, and ascending a staircase, of Pentelic marble, were ushered into a suite of lofty chambers, lined with oriental tapestry, and furnished with many costly couches and cabinets. While they admired a spectacle so different to any thing they had recently beheld or experienced, the seneschal, followed by a number of slaves in splendid attire, advanced and offered them rare and choice refreshments, coffee and confectionary, sherbets and spiced wines. When they had partaken of this elegant cheer, Nicæus intimated to the seneschal that the Lady Iduna might probably wish to retire, and instantly a discreet matron, followed by six most beautiful girls, each bearing a fragrant torch of cinnamon and roses, advanced and offered to conduct the Lady Iduna to her apartments.

The matron and her company of maidens conducted the daughter of Hunniades down a long gallery, which led to a suite of the prettiest chambers in the world. The first was an antechamber, painted like a bower, but filled with the music of living birds; the second, which was much larger, was entirely covered with Venetian mirrors, and resting on a bright Persian carpet, were many couches of crimson velvet, covered with a variety of sumptuous dresses; the third room was a bath, made in the semblance of a gigantic shell. Its roof was of transparent alabaster, glowing with shadowy light.

XVII.

A *flourish* of trumpets announced the return of the Lady Iduna, and the Prince of Athens, magnificently attired, came forward with a smile and led her, with a compliment on her resuming the dress of her sex, if not of her country, to the banquet. Iduna was not uninfluenced by that excitement which is insensibly produced by a sudden change of scene and circumstances, and especially by an unexpected transition from hardship, peril, and suffering, to luxury, security, and enjoyment. Their spirits were elevated and gay: she smiled upon Nicæus with a cheerful sympathy. They feasted, they listened to sweet music, they talked over their late adventures, and animated by their own enjoyment, they became more sanguine as to the fate of Iskander.

"In two or three days we shall know more," said Nicæus. "In the mean time, rest is absolutely necessary to you. It is only now that you will begin to be sensible of the exertion you have made. If Iskander be at Croia, he has already informed your father of your escape; if he have not arrived, I have arranged that a courier shall be despatched to Hunniades from that city. Do not be anxious. Try to be happy. I am myself sanguine that you will find all well. Come, pledge me your father's health, fair lady, in this goblet of Tenedos!"

"How know I that at this moment he may not be at the point of death?" replied Iduna. "When I am absent from those I love, I dream only of their unhappiness."

"At this moment also," rejoined Nicæus, "he dreams perhaps of your imprisonment among barbarians. Yet how mistaken! Let that consideration support you. Come! here is to the eremite."

"As willing, if not as sumptuous a host as our

present one," said Iduna; and when, by-the-by, do you think that your friend, the Lord Justinian, will arrive?"

"O! never mind him," said Nicæus. "He would have arrived to-morrow, but the great news which I gave him has probably changed his plans. I told him of the approaching invasion, and he has perhaps found it necessary to visit the neighbouring chieftains, or even to go on to Croia."

"Well-a-day!" exclaimed Iduna, "I would we were in my father's camp!"

"We shall soon be there, dear lady," replied the prince. "Come, worthy seneschal," he added, turning to that functionary, "drink to this noble lady's happy meeting with her friends."

XVIII.

THREE or four days passed away at the castle of Justinian, in which Nicæus used his utmost exertions to divert the anxiety of Iduna. One day was spent in examining the castle, on another he amused her with a hawking-party, on a third he carried her to the neighbouring ruins of a temple, and read his favourite *Æschylus* to her amid its lone and elegant columns. It was impossible for any one to be more amiable and entertaining, and Iduna could not resist from recognising his many virtues and accomplishments. The courier had not yet returned from Croia, which Nicæus accounted for by many satisfactory reasons. The suspense, however, at length became so painful to Iduna, that she proposed to the Prince of Athens that they should, without further delay, proceed to that city. As usual, Nicæus was not wanting in many plausible arguments in favour of their remaining at the castle, but Iduna was resolute.

"Indeed, dear Nicæus," she said, "my anxiety to see my father, or hear from him, is so great, that there is scarcely any danger which I would not encounter to gratify my wish. I feel that I have already taxed your endurance too much. But we are no longer in a hostile land, and guards and guides are to be engaged. Let me then depart alone!"

"Iduna!" exclaimed Nicæus, reproachfully. "Alas! Iduna, you are cruel, but I did not expect this!"

"Dear Nicæus!" she answered, "you always misinterpret me! It would infinitely delight me to be restored to Hunniades by yourself, but these are no common times, and you are no common person. You forget that there is one that has greater claims upon you even than a forlorn maiden—your country. And whether Iskander be at Croia or not, Greece requires the presence and exertions of the Prince of Athens."

"I have no country," replied Nicæus, mournfully, "and no object for which to exert myself."

"Nicæus! Is this the poetic patriot who was yesterday envying Themistocles?"

"Alas! Iduna, yesterday you were my muse. I do not wonder you are wearied of this castle," continued the prince, in a melancholy tone. "This spot contains nothing to interest you; but for me, it holds all that is dear, and—O! gentle maiden, one smile from you, one smile of inspiration, and I would not envy Themistocles, and might perhaps rival him."

They were walking together in the hall of the castle; Iduna stepped aside and affected to ex-

mine a curious buckler. Nicæus followed her, and placing his arm gently in hers, led her away.

"Dearest Iduna," he said, "pardon me, but men struggle for their fate. Mine is in your power. It is a contest between misery and happiness, glory and perhaps infamy. Do not then wonder that I will not yield my chance of the brighter fortune without an effort. Once more I appeal to your pity, if not to your love. Were Iduna mine, were she to hold out but the possibility of her being mine, there is no career—solemnly I avow what solemnly I feel—there is no career of which I could not be capable, and no conditions to which I would not willingly subscribe. But this certainty, or this contingency, I must have: I cannot exist without the alternative. And now, upon my knees, I implore her to grant it to me!"

"Nicæus," said Iduna, "this continued recurrence to a forbidden subject is most ungenerous."

"Alas! Iduna, my life depends upon a word, which you will not speak, and you talk of generosity! No! Iduna, it is not I that am ungenerous."

"Let me say then unreasonable, Prince Nicæus."

"Say what you like, Iduna, provided you say that you are mine."

"Pardon me, sir; I am free."

"Free! You have ever underrated me, Iduna. To whom do you owe this boasted freedom?"

"This is not the first time," remarked Iduna, "that you have reminded me of an obligation, the memory of which is indelibly impressed upon my heart, and for which even the present conversation cannot make me feel less grateful. I can never forget that I owe all that is dear to yourself and your companion."

"My companion!" replied the Prince of Athens, pale and passionate. "My companion! Am I ever to be reminded of my companion?"

"Nicæus!" said Iduna; "if you forget what is due to me, at least endeavour to remember what is due to yourself!"

"Beautiful being!" said the prince, advancing and passionately seizing her hand; "pardon me!—pardon me! I am not master of my reason; I am nothing, I am nothing while Iduna hesitates."

"She does not hesitate, Nicæus. I desire—I require that this conversation shall cease—shall never, never be renewed."

"And I tell thee, haughty woman," said the Prince of Athens, grinding his teeth, and speaking with violent action, "that I will no longer be despised with impunity. Iduna is mine, or is no one else's."

"Is it possible!" exclaimed the daughter of Huniades. "Is it indeed come to this! But why am I surprised? I have long known Nicæus. I quit this castle instantly."

"You are a prisoner," replied the prince, very calmly, and leaning with folded arms against the wall.

"A prisoner!" exclaimed Iduna, a little alarmed—"A prisoner! I defy you, sir. You are only a guest like myself. I will appeal to the senechal in the absence of his lord. He will never permit the honour of his master's flag to be violated by the irrational caprice of a passionate boy."

"What lord?" inquired Nicæus.

"Your friend, the Lord Justinian," answered Iduna. "He could little anticipate such an abuse of his hospitality."

"My friend, the Lord Justinian!" replied Nicæus, with a malignant smile. "I am surprised that a personage of the Lady Iduna's deep discrimination should so easily be deceived by 'a passionate boy!' Is it possible that you could have supposed for a moment that there was any other lord of this castle, save your devoted slave?"

"What!" exclaimed Iduna, really frightened.

"I have indeed the honour of finding the Lady Iduna my guest," continued Nicæus, in a tone of bitter railery. "This castle of Kallista, the fairest in all Epirus, I inherit from my mother. Of late I have seldom visited it; but indeed it will become a favourite residence of mine, if it be, as I anticipate, the scene of my nuptial ceremony."

Iduna looked around her with astonishment, then threw herself upon a couch, and burst into tears. The Prince of Athens walked up and down the hall with an air of determined coolness.

"Perfidious!" exclaimed Iduna between her sobs.

"Lady Iduna," said the prince, and he seated himself by her side. "I will not attempt to palliate a deception which your charms could alone inspire and can alone justify. Hear me, Lady Iduna, hear me with calmness. I love you; I love with a passion which has been as constant as it is strong. My birth, my rank, my fortunes, do not disqualify me for a union with the daughter of the great Huniades. If my personal claims may sink in comparison with her surpassing excellence, I am yet to learn that any other prince in Christendom can urge a more effective plea. I am young; the ladies of the court have called me handsome: by your great father's side I have broken some lances in your honour; and even Iduna once confessed she thought me clever. Come, come, be merciful! Let my beautiful Athens receive a fitting mistress. A holy father is in readiness, dear maiden. Come now, one smile! In a few days we shall reach your father's camp, and then we will kneel, as I do now, and beg a blessing on our happy union." As he spoke, he dropped upon his knee, and stealing her hand, looked into her face. It was sorrowful and gloomy.

"It is vain, Nicæus," said Iduna, "to appeal to your generosity; it is useless to talk of the past; it is idle to reproach you for the present. I am a woman, alone and persecuted, where I could least anticipate persecution. Nicæus, I never can be yours; and now I deliver myself to the mercy of Almighty God."

"Tis well," replied Nicæus. "From the tower of the castle you may behold the waves of the Ionian sea. You will remain here a close prisoner, until one of my galleys arrives from Piræus, to bear us to Italy. Mine you must be, Iduna. It remains for you to decide under what circumstances. Continue in your obstinacy, and you may bid farewell for ever to your country and to your father. Be reasonable, and a destiny awaits you which offers every thing that has hitherto been considered the source or cause of happiness." Thus speaking, the prince retired, leaving Lady Iduna to her own unhappy thoughts.

XIX.

THE Lady Iduna was at first inclined to view the conduct of the Prince of Athens as one of those passionate and passing obessions in which he

long acquaintance with him had taught her he was accustomed to indulge. But when on retiring soon after to her apartments, she was informed by her attendant matron that she must in future consider herself a prisoner, and not venture again to quit them without permission, she began to tremble at the possible violence of an ill-regulated mind. She endeavoured to interest her attendant in her behalf; but the matron was too well schooled to evince any feeling or express any opinion on the subject; and indeed, at length, fairly informed Iduna that she was commanded to confine her conversation to the duties of her office.

The Lady Iduna was very unhappy. She thought of her father, she thought of Iskander. The past seemed a dream; she was often tempted to believe that she was still, and had ever been, a prisoner in the serail of Adrianople; and that all the late wonderful incidents of her life were but the shifting scenes of some wild slumber. And then some slight incident, the sound of a bell, or the sight of some holy emblem, assured her she was in a Christian land, and convinced her of the strange truth that she was indeed in captivity, and a prisoner, above all others, to the fond companion of her youth. Her indignation at the conduct of Nicæus roused her courage; she resolved to make an effort to escape. Her rooms were only lighted from above; she determined to steal forth at night into the gallery; the door was secured. She hastened back to her chamber in fear and sorrow, and wept.

Twice in the course of the day the stern and silent matron visited Iduna with her food; and as she retired, secured the door. This was the only individual that the imprisoned lady ever beheld, and thus heavily rolled on upwards of a week. On the eve of the ninth day, Iduna was surprised by the matron presenting her a letter as she quitted the chamber for the night. Iduna seized it with a feeling of curiosity not unmixed with pleasure. It was the only incident that had occurred during her captivity. She recognised the handwriting of Nicæus, and threw it down with vexation at her silliness in supposing, for a moment, that the matron could have been the emissary of any other person.

Yet the letter must be read, and at length she opened it. It informed her that a ship had arrived from Athens at the coast, and that to-morrow she must depart for Italy. It told her also, that the Turks, under Mahomed, had invaded Albania; and that the Hungarians under the command of her father, had come to support the cross. It said nothing of Iskander. But it reminded her that little more than the same time that would carry her to the coast to embark for a foreign land, would, were she wise, alike enable Nicæus to place her in her father's arms, and allow him to join in the great struggle for his country and his creed. The letter was written with firmness, but tenderly. It left, however, on the mind of Iduna, an impression of the desperate resolution of the writer.

Now it so happened that as this unhappy lady jumped from her couch, and paced the room in the perturbation of her mind, the wind of her drapery extinguished her lamp. As her attendant or jailer, had paid her last visit for the day, there seemed little chance of its being again illumined. The miserable are always more unhappy in the dark. Light is the greatest of comforters. And this little misfortune seemed to the forlorn Iduna almost overwhelming. And as she attempted to look around,

and wrung her hands in very woe, her attention was attracted by a brilliant streak of light upon the wall, which greatly surprised her. She groped her way in its direction, and slowly stretching forth her hand, observed that it made its way through a chink in the frame of one of the great mirrors which were inlaid in the wall. As she pressed the frame, she felt to her surprise that it sprang forward. Had she not been very cautious the advancing mirror would have struck her with great force, but she had presence of mind to withdraw her hand very gradually, repressing the swiftness of the spring. The aperture occasioned by the opening of the mirror consisted of a recess, formed by a closed up window. An old wooden shutter, or blind, in so ruinous a state, that the light freely made its way, was the only barrier against the elements. Iduna seizing the handle which remained, at once drew it open with little difficulty.

The captive gazed with gladdened feelings upon the free and beautiful scene. Beneath her rose the rich and aromatic shrubs tinged with the soft and silver light of eve: before her extended the wide and fertile champaign, skirted by the dark and undulating mountains: in the clear sky, glittering and sharp, sparkled the first crescent of the new moon, an auspicious omen to the Moslem invaders.

Iduna gazed with joy upon the landscape, and then hastily descending from the recess, she placed her hands to her eyes, so long unaccustomed to the light. Perhaps, too, she indulged in momentary meditation. For suddenly seizing a number of shawls which were lying on the couches, she knotted them together, and then striving with all her force, she placed the heaviest couch on one end of the costly cord, and then throwing the other out of the window, and intrusting herself to the merciful care of the holy Virgin, the brave daughter of Hunniades successfully dropped down into the garden below.

She stopped to breathe, and to revel in her emancipated existence. It was a bold enterprise gallantly achieved. But the danger had now only commenced. She found that she had lighted at the back of the castle. She stole along upon tip-toe, timid as a fawn. She remembered a small wicket-gate that led into the open country. She arrived at it. It was of course guarded. The single sentinel was kneeling before an image of St. George, beside him was an empty drinking-cup and an exhausted wine-skin.

"Holy saint!" exclaimed the pious sentinel, "preserve us from all Turkish infidels!" Iduna stole behind him. "Shall men who drink no wine conquer true Christians!" continued the sentinel. Iduna placed her hand upon the lock. "We thank thee for our good vintage," said the sentinel. Iduna opened the gate with the noiseless touch which a feminine finger alone can command. "And for the rise of Lord Iskander!" added the sentinel. Iduna escaped!

Now she indeed was free. Swiftly she ran over the wide plain. She hoped to reach some town or village before her escape could be discovered, and she hurried on for three hours without resting. She came to a beautiful grove of olive trees that spread in extensive ramifications about the plain. And through this beautiful grove of olive trees her path seemed to lead. So she entered and advanced. And when she had journeyed for about a mile, she came to an open and very verdant piece of ground

which was, as it were, the heart of the grove. In its centre rose a fair and antique structure of white marble, shrouding from the noonday sun the perennial flow of a very famous fountain. It was near on midnight. Iduna was wearied, and she sat down upon the steps of the fountain for rest. And while she was musing over all the strange adventures of her life, she heard a rustling in the wood, and being alarmed, she rose and hid herself behind a tree.

And while she stood there, with palpitating heart, the figure of a man advanced to the fountain from an opposite direction of the grove. He went up the steps, and looked down upon the spring as if he were about to drink, but instead of doing that, he drew his cimeter and plunged it into the water, and called out with a loud voice the name of "Iskander!" three times. Whereupon Iduna, actuated by an irresistible impulse, came forward from her hiding-place, but instantly gave a loud shriek when she beheld—the Prince Mahomed!

"O! night of glory!" exclaimed the prince, advancing, "Do I indeed behold the fair Iduna! This is truly magic!"

"Away! away!" exclaimed the distracted Iduna, as she endeavoured to fly from him.

"He has kept his word, that cunning leech, better than I expected," said Mahomed, seizing her.

"As well as you deserve, ravisher!" exclaimed a majestic voice. A tall figure rushed forward from the wood and dashed back the Turk.

"I am here to complete my contract, Prince Mahomed," said the stranger, drawing his sword.

"Iskander!" exclaimed the prince.

"We have met before, prince. Let us so act now that we may meet for the last time."

"Infamous, infernal traitor," exclaimed Mahomed, "dost thou, indeed, imagine that I will sully my imperial blade with the blood of my runaway slave! No! I came here to secure thy punishment, but I cannot condescend to become thy punisher. Advance, guards, and seize him! Seize them both!"

Iduna flew to Iskander, who caught her in one arm, while he waved his cimeter with the other. The guards of Mahomed poured forth from the side of the grove whence the prince had issued.

"And dost thou, indeed, think, Mahomed," said Iskander, "that I have been educated in the seraglio to be duped by Moslem craft! I offer thee single combat if thou desirest it, but combat as we may, the struggle shall be equal." He whistled, and instantly a body of Hungarians, headed by Hunniades himself, advanced from the side of the grove whence Iskander had issued.

"Come on, then," said Mahomed; "each to his man." Their swords clashed, but the principal attendants of the son of Amurath, deeming the affair, under the present circumstances, assumed the character of a mere rash adventure, bore away the Turkish prince.

"To-morrow, then, this fray shall be decided, on the plains of Kallista," said Mahomed.

"Epirus is prepared," replied Iskander.

The Turks withdrew. Iskander bore the senseless form of Iduna to her father. Hunniades embraced his long lost child. They sprinkled her face with water from the fountain. She revived.

"Where is Nicæus?" inquired Iskander; "and how came you again, dear lady, in the power of Mahomed?"

"Alas! noble sir, my twice deliverer," answered Iduna, "I have, indeed, again been doomed to captivity, but my persecutor, I blush to say, was this time a Christian prince."

"Holy Virgin!" exclaimed Iskander. "Who can this villain be?"

"The villain, Lord Iskander, is your friend; and your pupil, dear father."

"Nicæus of Athens!" exclaimed Hunniades.

Iskander was silent and melancholy.

Thereupon the Lady Iduna recounted to her father and Iskander, sitting between them on the margin of the fount, all that had occurred to her, since herself and Nicæus parted with Iskander; nor did she omit to relate to Hunniades all the devotion of Iskander, respecting which, like a truly brave man, he had himself been silent. The great Hunniades scarcely knew which rather to do, to lavish his affection on his beloved child, or his gratitude upon Iskander. Thus they went on conversing for some time, Iskander placing his own cloak around Iduna, and almost unconsciously winding his arm around her unresisting form.

Just as they were preparing to return to the Christian camp, a great noise was heard in the grove, and presently, in the direction whence Iduna had arrived, there came a band of men, bearing torches and examining the grove in all directions in great agitation. Iskander and Hunniades stood upon their guard, but soon perceived they were Greeks. Their leader, seeing a group near the fountain, advanced to make inquiries respecting the object of his search, but when he indeed recognised the persons who formed the group, the torch fell from his grasp, and he turned away his head and hid his face in his hands.

Iduna clung to her father; Iskander stood with his eyes fixed upon the ground, but Hunniades stern and terrible, disembarassing himself of the grasp of his daughter, advanced and laid his hand upon the stranger.

"Young man," said the noble father, "were it contrition instead of shame that inspired this attitude, it might be better. I have often warned you of the fatal consequences of a reckless indulgence of the passions. More than once I have predicted to you, that however great might be your confidence in your ingenuity and your resources, the hour would arrive when such a career would place you in a position as despicable as it was shameful. That hour has arrived, and that position is now filled by the Prince of Athens. You stand before the three individuals in this world whom you have most injured, and whom you were most bound to love and to protect. Here is a friend, who has hazarded his property and his existence for your life and your happiness. And you have made him a mere pander to your lusts, and then deserted him in his greatest necessities. This maiden was the companion of your youth, and entitled to your kindest offices. You have treated her infinitely worse than her Turkish captor. And for myself, sir, your father was my dearest friend. I endeavoured to repay his friendship by supplying his place to his orphan child. How I discharged my duty, it becomes not me to say: how you have discharged yours, this lady here, my daughter, your late prisoner, sir, can best prove."

"O! spare me, spare me, sir," said the Prince of Athens, turning and falling upon his knees. "I am most wretched. Every word cuts to my very soul."

“ Providence has baffled all my arts, and I am
 teful. Whether this lady can, indeed, forgive
 , I hardly dare to think, or even hope. And
 forgiveness is a heavenly boon. Perhaps the
 mory of old days may melt her. As for your-
 , sir—but I'll not speak, I cannot. Noble
 ander, if I mistake not, you may whisper words
 that fair ear, less grating than my own. May
 I be happy! I will not profane your prospects
 h my vows. And yet I'll say farewell!”
 The Prince of Athens turned away with an air
 complete wretchedness, and slowly withdrew,
 ander followed him.

“ Nicæus,” said Iskander; but the prince entered
 grove, and did not turn round.

“ Dear Nicæus,” said Iskander. The prince
 itated.

“ Let us not part thus,” said Iskander. “ Iduna
 most unhappy. She bade me tell you she had
 gotten all.”

“ God bless her, and God bless you too!” replied
 cæus. “ I pray you let me go.”

“ Nay! dear Nicæus, are we not friends?”

“ The best and truest, Iskander. I will to the
 ap, and meet you in your tent ere morning break.
 present, I would be alone.”

“ Dear Nicæus, one word. You have said upon
 point, what I could well wish unsaid, and dared
 prophesy what may never happen. I am not
 de for such supreme felicity. Epirus is my
 stress, my Nicæus. As there is a living God,
 friend, most solemnly I vow, I have had no
 ights in this affair, but for your honour.”

“ I know it, my dear friend, I know it,” replied
 cæus. “ I keenly feel your admirable worth.
 no more, say no more! She is a fit wife for
 ero, and you *are* one!”

XX.

AFTER the battle of the bridge, Iskander had
 ried to Croia without delay. In his progress,
 had made many fruitless inquiries after Iduna and
 cæus, but he consoled himself for the unsatisfac-
 y answers he received by the opinion that they
 taken a different course, and the conviction
 t all must now be safe. The messenger from
 sia that informed Hunniades of the escape of his
 ighter, also solicited his aid in favour of Epirus
 inst the impending invasion of the Turks, and
 mulated by personal gratitude as well as by pub-
 duty, Hunniades answered the solicitation in
 son, at the head of twenty thousand lances.

Hunniades and Iskander had mutually flattered
 selves when apart, that each would be able to
 ell the anxiety of the other on the subject of
 na. The leader of Epirus flattered himself that
 late companions had proceeded at once to
 ansylvania, and the vaivode himself had in-
 ged in the delightful hope that the first person
 should embrace at Croia would be his long-lost
 Id. When, therefore, they met, and were mu-
 ally incapable of imparting any information on
 subject to each other, they were filled with
 onishment and disquietude. Events, however,
 re them little opportunity to indulge in anxiety
 grief. On the day that Hunniades and his
 ces arrived at Croia, the invading army of the
 rks under the Prince Mahomed crossed the

mountains, and soon after pitched their camp on
 the fertile plain of Kallista.

As Iskander, by the aid of Hunniades and the
 neighbouring princes, and the patriotic exertions
 of his countrymen, was at this moment at the head
 of a force which the Turkish prince could not have
 anticipated, he resolved to march at once to meet
 the Ottomans, and decide the fate of Greece by a
 pitched battle.

The night before the arrival of Iduna at the fa-
 mous fountain, the Christian army had taken up
 its position within a few miles of the Turks. The
 turbaned warriors wished to delay the engagement
 until the new moon, the eve of which was at hand.
 And it happened on that said eve that Iskander,
 calling to mind his contract with the Turkish
 prince made in the gardens of the seraglio at Adrian-
 ople, and believing from the superstitious character
 of Mahomed that he would not fail to be at the
 appointed spot, resolved, as we have seen, to repair
 to the fountain of Kallista.

And now from that fountain the hero retired,
 bearing with him a prize scarcely less precious than
 the freedom of the country, for which he was to
 combat on the morrow's morn.

Ere the dawn had broken, the Christian power
 was in motion. Iskander commanded the centre,
 Hunniades the right wing. The left was intrusted
 at his urgent request to the Prince of Athens. A
 mist that hung about the plain, allowed Nicæus to
 charge the right wing of the Turks almost unper-
 ceived. He charged with irresistible fury, and soon
 disordered the ranks of the Moslem. Mahomed
 with the reserve hastened to their aid. A mighty
 multitude of janissaries, shouting the name of Allah
 and his prophet, penetrated the Christian centre
 Hunniades endeavoured to attack them on their
 flank, but was himself charged by the Turkish
 cavalry. The battle was now general, and raged
 with terrible fury. Iskander had secreted in his
 centre a new and powerful battery of cannon, pre-
 sented to him by the pope, and which had just ar-
 rived from Venice. This battery played upon the
 janissaries with great destruction. He himself
 mowed them down with his irresistible cimeter.

Infinite was the slaughter! awful the uproar!
 But of all the Christian knights, this day, no one
 performed such mighty feats of arms as the Prince
 of Athens. With a reckless desperation, he dashed
 about the field, and every thing seemed to yield to
 his inspiring impulse. His example animated his
 men with such a degree of enthusiasm, that the
 division to which he was opposed, although en-
 couraged by the presence of Mahomed himself,
 could no longer withstand the desperate courage
 of the Christians, and they fled in all directions.
 Then, rushing to the aid of Iskander, Nicæus, at
 the head of a body of picked men, dashed upon the
 rear of the janissaries, and nearly surrounded them.
 Hunniades instantly made a fresh charge upon the
 left wing of the Turks. A panic fell upon the
 Moslem, who were little prepared for such a
 demonstration of strength on the part of their
 adversaries. In a few minutes their order seemed
 generally broken, and their leaders in vain endeav-
 oured to rally them. Waving his bloody cimeter,
 and bounding on his black charger, Iskander called
 upon his men to secure the triumph of the cross
 and the freedom of Epirus. Pursuit was now
 general.

XXI.

THE Turks were massacred by thousands. Mahomed, when he found that all was lost, fled to the mountains, with a train of guards and eunuchs, and left the care of his dispersed host to his pashas. The hills were covered with the fugitives and their pursuers. Some also fled to the sea-shore, where the Turkish fleet was at anchor. The plain was strewn with corpses and arms, and tents and standards. The sun was now high in the heavens. The mist had cleared away; but occasional clouds of smoke still sailed about.

A solitary Christian knight entered a winding pass in the green hills, apart from the scene of strife. The slow and trembling step of his wearied steed would have ill qualified him to join in the triumphant pursuit, even had he himself been physically enabled; but the Christian knight was covered with gore, unhappily not alone that of his enemies. He was, indeed, streaming with desperate wounds, and scarcely could his fainting form retain its tottering seat.

The winding pass, which, for some singular reason, he now pursued in solitude, instead of returning to the busy camp for aid and assistance, conducted the knight to a small green valley, covered with sweet herbs, and entirely surrounded by hanging woods. In the centre rose the ruins of a Doric fane: three or four columns gray and majestic. All was still and silent, save that in the clear blue sky an eagle flew, high in the air, but whirling round the temple.

The knight reached the ruins of the Doric fane, and with difficulty dismounting from his charger, fell upon the soft and flowery turf, and for some moments was motionless. His horse stole a few yards away, and, though scarcely less injured than his rider, instantly commenced cropping the inviting pasture.

At length the Christian knight slowly raised his head, and leaning on his arm, sighed deeply. His face was very pale; but as he looked up and perceived the eagle in the heaven, a smile played upon his pallid cheek, and his beautiful eye gleamed with a sudden flash of light.

"Glorious bird!" murmured the Christian, "once I deemed that my career might re-
thine! 'Tis over now; and Greece, for whom I would have done so much, will soon forget my immemorial name. I have stolen here to silence and in beauty. This blue air, and green woods, and these lone columns, which have been a consolation, breathing of the past, and of the days wherein I fain had have escaped from the fell field of carnage among them. Farewell! my country! F to one more beautiful than Greece—farewell!"

These were the last words of Nicæus, Prince of Athens!

XXII.

WHILE the unhappy lover of the daughter of Hunniades breathed his last words to the elements, his more fortunate friend received centre of his scene of triumph, the glorious gratulations of his emancipated country. The conquest of the Turks was complete, a overthrow, coupled with their recent defeat, secured Christendom from their domination during the remainder of the reign of Amurath Second. Surrounded by his princely allies, the chieftains of Epirus, the victorious standard of Christendom, and the triumphant trophies of Moslemism, Iskander received from the great daughter of his beautiful daughter.—"To these brave warriors," said the hero, "I offer to your daughter a safe, an honourable Christian home."

"It is to thee, great sir, that Epirus owes her liberty," said an ancient chieftain, addressing Iskander, "its national existence, and its holy rights. All that we have to do now is to preserve them, nor indeed do I see that we can more effectually maintain these great objects than by entreating God to mount the redeemed throne of thy ancestors. Therefore I say, GOD SAVE ISKANDER, KING OF EPIRUS!"

And all the people shouted and said, "GOD SAVE THE KING! GOD SAVE ISKANDER, KING OF EPIRUS!"





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